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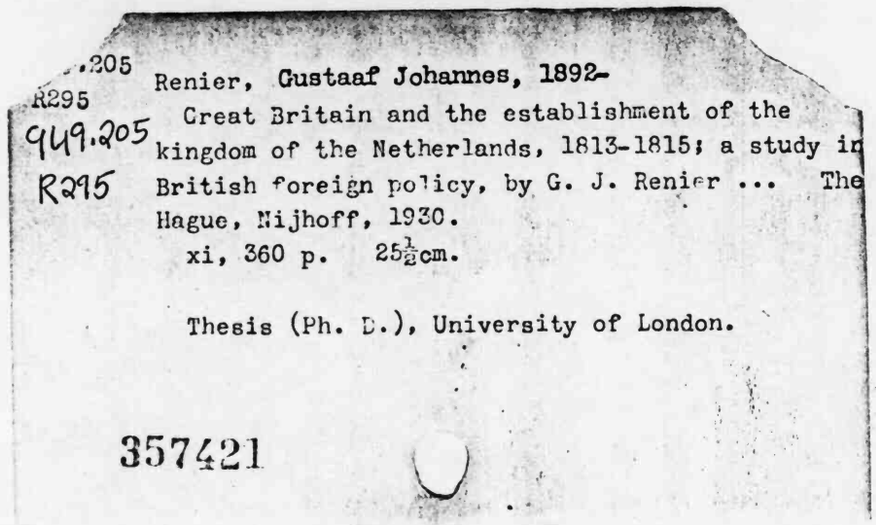

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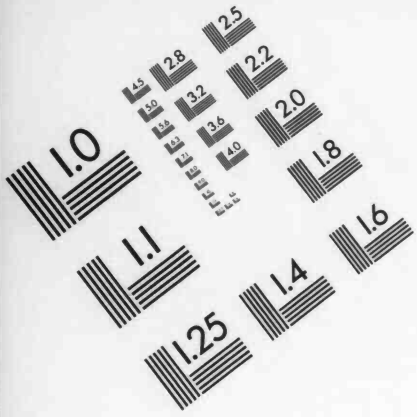

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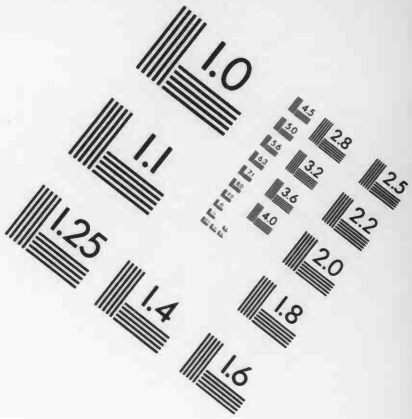

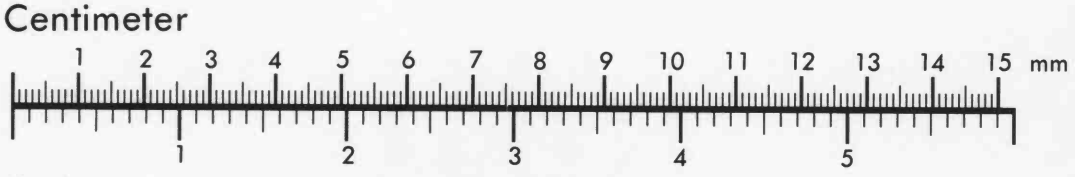

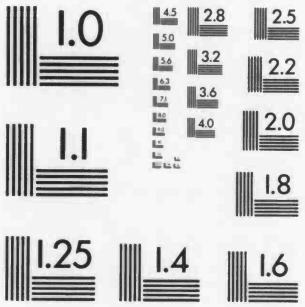

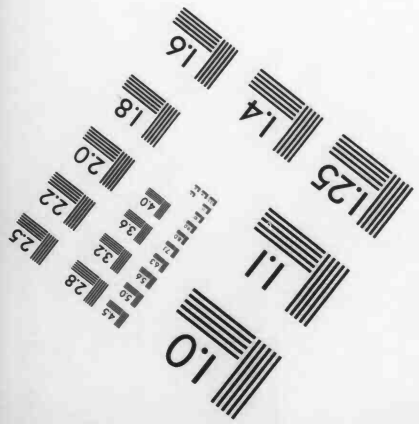

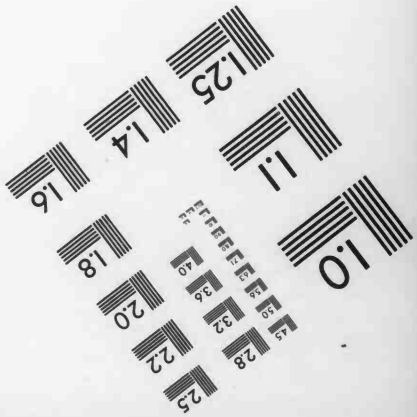

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GREAT BRITAIN AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS
1813—1815

GREAT BRITAIN

AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

1813–1815

A STUDY IN BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

BY

G. J. RENIER Ph. D.

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A LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE FOOTNOTES

Camb. Hist. Brit. For. Pol.	*Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy.*
Colenbrander, *Grondwet*	*Het Ontstaan der Grondwet.*
F.O.	*Foreign Office.*
Ged.	Colenbrander's *Gedenkstukken* etc. (see bibliography).
H.O.	*Home Office.*
Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*	Van Hogendorp, *Brieven en Gedenkschriften.*
Webster, *Br. Dipl.*	Webster, *British Diplomacy 1813-15.*

PREFACE

The settlement effected at the end of the war of 1914–18 caused many a student of international affairs to turn with regretful and envious eyes to the splendid achievement of the statesmen who wound up the Napoleonic wars. More recently, as the first centenary of the existence of the Belgian state was approaching, it became of special interest to examine that part of the Vienna settlement which was terminated by the Belgian revolution of 1830. It was found, then, that in one respect political conditions had not changed. By making it clear, in 1914, that a German occupation of the Flemish coast would never be tolerated, and by preventing, in 1919, the annexation of Dutch territory to Belgium, which would have unduly strengthened the influence of France in the Netherlands, Great Britain proved that, in the second decade of the twentieth century, her conception of the problem of the Netherlands was the same as in the second decade of the nineteenth century. The same formula held good in British counsels in 1813–15, in 1830, in 1914, and in 1919. If it be possible at all to forecast the future course of events, it would appear that here we are confronted with the existence of a definite principle which the leaders of British foreign policy must necessarily continue to follow.

These problems of 115 years ago have an amazing actuality. As a positive or as a negative element, nationality runs through them like a red thread, and nationality, in the Netherlands of to-day, is a delicate and thorny question. There has been no attempt to burke this question under the mistaken impression that history dwells upon lofty snow-capped peaks where the throb of human passions cannot be perceived. But the partiality which has guided my judgements is of a kind that can please no single party in the Netherlands. „Little

Netherlanders" will read with displeasure of my belief in the historical unity of the Northern and Southern Netherlands, of which the Kingdom of William I (1815–1830) was the adequate and fitting expression. "Great Netherlanders" may disapprove of my belief in the existence of a Belgian nationality at the end of 1914, and of my conviction that, in 1814, there existed an active sense of cohesion among the inhabitants of Belgium. "Belgicists" will be hurt when I declare that, in the same year, the Belgians lacked the sense of distinction from other national groups, and consequently were not a nationality. Nor will they take kindly to the view that, at the time of writing, there is, by the same criterion of cohesion and distinction, no real Belgian nationality. I have, similarly, judged of the early years of King William I of the Netherlands, and of the manner in which Holland became an independent state in 1813, in a way which is bound to offend certain susceptibilities.

My attitude is due to the conception that nationality is merely a form of consciousness, fluctuating as all things fluctuate which have their existence only in the human mind. For the result of this conception is an attitude, not only towards nationalism, but even towards nationality, which may deservedly be described as arrogant, but which is nevertheless also that of the greatest super-national organisation in the world, the British Empire. Notwithstanding my conviction that many of the deeds that went to the making of this Empire, and not the least some of those recounted in the present work, belong to a morality which is not that of the best minds of the twentieth century, it is my belief that the British Empire rests upon the only foundation on which a peaceful world can be established, on the sense of unity which transcends nationality.

It is with great pleasure that I express my thanks to my friend Dr. Pieter Geyl, Professor of Dutch History and Institutions in the University of London, who suggested to me the subject of this work, and who advised me to write it as a thesis for a degree in this university. It is owing to his encouragement, to his example and to his inspiration, while he acted as my director of studies, that I persevered in what

was often an arduous task, because it had to be performed concurrently with the duties of my profession.

In the next place my thanks are due to Prof. H. T. Colenbrander, the Editor of the Gedenkstukken der Algemeene Geschiedenis van Nederland, *without whose conscientious and patient labours this work would have been impossible. I thank Dr. C. Gerretson, Professor of Colonial History in the University of Utrecht, for the valuable criticisms he contributed after reading in typescript my chapter on the return of the Dutch colonies. At the same time I wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this as in other chapters are exclusively my own. My thanks are also due to Mr. S. T. Bindoff, B. A., of University College, London, who compiled the index to this volume, and to all those whose encouragement and goodwill helped me during the writing and the publication of my work.*

The publication of "Great Britain and the Establishment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands" has been aided by a grant from the Publication Fund of the University of London.

G. J. R.

INTRODUCTION

A. The Northern and Southern Netherlands: A Question of Terminology
B. The Netherlands in French Policy
C. The Netherlands in English Policy
D. Great Britain and the Netherlands during the Wars of the Revolution and the Empire
E. The Oranges in Exile

In December 1813 the head of the House of Orange became Sovereign of the State which had been the Dutch Republic. In the course of 1814 and 1815 the country which is now Belgium was added to his territory, and in June 1815 he became King of the United Netherlands. More than to any other single cause this great change from what had been the status of Holland and of Belgium before the French Revolution was due to the policy pursued by the British Government.

The purpose of this work is to define the place occupied by the problem of the Netherlands in the activities of British diplomacy from the end of 1812 to the beginning of 1816 and, by examining the various solutions that were successively proposed, and that which was eventually adopted in the light of general events, to appraise the importance attached to the Netherlands in comparison with that of other matters which claimed attention.

A. — *The Northern and Southern Netherlands: a Question of Terminology*

A difficulty of terminology arises at the outset of this study. By whatever name we call the Low Countries extending along the coast from Dunkirk to the mouth of the Ems, we shall be unable to avoid every chance of

confusion. The name of "The Netherlands" will be used for the territories which, at the time of writing, form the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Belgium, and the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. This denomination will admittedly rest upon a choice which is, up to a point, arbitrary. At the time of writing, "The Netherlands" is the official name of the northern half of the territory in question, while in the eighteenth century it was the usual denomination of the southern half. But we shall be justified in the use of the name of "Netherlands" in its wider acceptance, because it really has applied in the past to a territory which possesses a certain historic unity. This unity became more visible in the days of Charles V, who brought the whole of these Low Countries under his sway. In the course of the centuries they had acquired a number of common characteristics, political institutions, judiciary forms, and economic tendencies, which distinguished them from their French and German neighbours[1].

In the latter half of the sixteenth century the partial success of the Spanish arms established within the Netherlands the division into two parts which coincides, with few differences, with that which exists to-day. The Northern half became a federal state known as "The United Provinces", also called the Dutch Republic or Holland. The name of Holland was really that of the most important of the seven Provinces or States which formed the federation. When, in the course of this work, the name of Holland is used, it will be to designate the whole of this country, unless it is specifically shown to apply only to the province of Holland. In so far as is feasible, we shall make use of the purely geographical designation of the "Northern Netherlands". It should be noted that for a brief period, from 1806 to 1810, "Holland" really was the offical name of this country, when it was a kingdom under Napoleon's brother Louis.

The southern half of the Netherlands is now the Kingdom of Belgium. This name also has changed its meaning

[1] Emile Bourgeois, *Manuel Historique de Politique Etrangère*, I. p. 176. Geyl, *Holland and Belgium*, passim.

in the course of the last few centuries. The Latin of the Renaissance called the Dutch language "lingua belgica", and it is only in the course of the eighteenth century that the word Belgic, *Belgique*, began to be applied to the southern part of the Netherlands. *Belgique*, at that period, was an adjective, used as a rule in conjunction with the word *Provinces* or *Etats*: *les Provinces belgiques*. At least until the end of the old régime it is advisable to avoid the use of the word Belgium, particularly as two out of the nine provinces of the country now so designated did not form part of it. What is now the provinces of Liège and Limburg was until 1795 an ecclesiastic principality which depended directly from the Empire. By using the purely geographical term "the Southern Netherlands" we shall avoid raising the question of the special status of Liège.

B. — *The Netherlands in French Policy*

The establishment in 1815 of a Kingdom which united the Northern and Southern Netherlands was a triumph of British policy. It was also the defeat of the system which France had followed for several centuries. An outline of the attitude adopted in the past by Great Britain and by France towards the Netherlands will help to throw light upon the significance of the post-Napoleonic settlement.

The story of French policy in the Netherlands would savour of intentional simplification and wear the aspect of an indictment if it were not left to be unfolded by a Frenchman. Let us turn, therefore, to Sorel, a reliable exponent of the French tradition. In his superbly constructed introduction to *La Révolution Française et l'Europe* he describes, in a manner which the most violent adversary of France would hesitate to emulate, how from the fifteenth century onward his country's foreign policy aimed at the expansion and domination of France in Europe[1].

Sorel tells how, as soon as the Capetians had success-

[1] Vol I, p. 244—336.

fully ended their task of establishing internal unity, the first thrusts were initiated towards the north and towards the east, which, from the point of view of the Netherlands at any rate, made France the main danger on the Continent. He distinguishes between two forms of French expansion, and between two kinds of war caused by them.

There existed, in the first place, a classical tradition learned and remembered by French *légistes*, French diplomats, and French monarchs, who had read in Caesar that the limits of Ancient Gaul were the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine. France, in their view, was the successor of Ancient Gaul, and her legitimate frontiers could only be those which Caesar had assigned to Gaul. Hence, the territory of Roussillon must be incorporated to bring the kingdom to the foot of the Pyrenees; and Savoy, this side of the Alps, must be considered an *irredenta*. Similarly, to the north and the north-east, Lorraine, the Rhineland, and all the Netherlands south of the Rhine were deemed unreclaimed territory. Wars fought in order to acquire these territories were what Sorel calls *guerres communes*.

Other wars also had to be fought, the *guerres de magnificence*, in obedience to a tradition of a different order. That ancient Teutonic warrior Charlemagne had been naturalised as a Frenchman by the writers of the *Chansons de Geste*, who had shown him as the ruler of *doulce France*, but also as the Emperor of the West, the master of Italy, the arbiter of Europe. All his prerogatives appeared to be auxiliary and natural functions of the crown of France. These were the traditions, the visions more often legendary than historical, which lured the French beyond even the most ambitious designs that might be justified by the theory of natural frontiers.

Briefly paraphrased, such is Sorel's broad outline; but its conclusions are almost too severe on his country. For if dreams of the past were an active factor in the shaping of French policy, sound realistic reasons were not lacking, at least for such expansion as was sought by the

guerres communes. France felt like a knight entering the lists in full armour but unfairly deprived of a helmet. Royal power had spread from Paris across the territories of weak principalities to the southernmost confines of ancient Gaul, but to the north the German Empire, in the days of its strength, had proved less easy to penetrate. The capital remained without cover, unpleasantly exposed to a raid from a northern enemy. The considerations adduced in his memoirs by Louis XIV for the *réunion* of Franche Comté point to this perpetual preoccupation of the rulers of France: "By opening for myself a passage into Germany I closed it at the same time to my enemies".

Tradition and self-preservation united to make France a natural enemy of the independence of the Netherlands. The southern portion was directly coveted, the security of the north permanently imperilled. Concerning the Southern Netherlands, Mazarin expressed the policy of France with a precision which leaves nothing to be desired: "L'acquisition des Pays-Bas Espagnols", he wrote to the French plenipotentiaries at Munster, "formerait à la ville de Paris un boulevard inexpugnable. Ce serait alors véritablement que l'on pourrait l'appeler le coeur de la France et qu'il serait placé dans l'endroit le plus sûr du royaume, puisque l'on aurait étendu les frontières jusques à la Hollande, et, du côté de l'Allemagne, jusques au Rhin...." [1]. The French saw, with equal lucidity, that the Dutch, as long as they could prevent it, would never allow them to conquer Belgium. They realised that for this reason the road to Brussels passed through The Hague. "The real way to conquer the Spanish Netherlands is to reduce the Dutch, if possible to annihilate them", were the words of Louvois, some twenty years later [2].

French policy, then, was a very real threat to the whole of the Netherlands. French security, and the Ancient Gaul

[1] Jan. 20th, 1646. Quoted in Bourgeois, *Manuel Historique de Politique Etrangère*, I, p. 44.
[2] To Condé, *ibid.*, p. 78.

tradition, demanded the possession of the Southern Netherlands; the natural impetus of conquest and the Charlemagne tradition might easily carry the French further still, if once they realised their first ambition. Fully aware of this, the Dutch tried to prevent even the first contingency — but this only hastened the moment when France was to become their declared enemy.

It is almost superfluous to say that reasons of state were not the only ones that directed French statesmen towards the Netherlands. When, on his return from Holland in May 1795, Siéyès triumphantly placed a Dutch guilder on the table of the *Comité de Salut Public*, he was not heralding the advent of a new factor in the relations between France and the Netherlands. At any time after the treaty of Munster the conquest of Holland would have considerably increased the financial and economic power of the French state. But this was never the paramount consideration, and, in any case, the economic factor worked in the same direction as the reason of state.

C. — *Great Britain and the Netherlands*

If the policy of France towards the Netherlands was simplicity itself — idealised history and strategic considerations — the policy of England is not so easily expressed. Two factors dragged it in two opposite directions. Accordingly as English statesmen, in the light of the general situation, gave more weight to the prosperity or to the safety of their country, their attitude towards the Netherlands assumed an entirely different character. Though the principle of action was twofold, it should not be supposed that its two elements had equal weight. Whenever it came to a clash between security and prosperity, reasons of state in the end prevailed over mercantile interest. For in the life of nations matters of safety, of prestige, and of potential power count for more than questions of interest and material advantage. Historical materialism will never be able to provide an adequate interpretation of the diplomatic relations between

England and the Netherlands. The most striking example of the relative importance of the economic and the political factors is found in the sudden interruption of the second Anglo-Dutch war, a war waged for purely economic reasons, as a result of the danger which threatened both countries when Louis XIV started the War of Devolution.

Commercial rivalry is written in large letters across the history of the relations between England and the Dutch Republic. As soon as her civil struggles were over, England was able to give her full attention to matters of trade and almost at once the first Dutch war (1652—54), which was to a large extent due to economic causes, broke out. During the remaining part of the seventeenth century, and well into the eighteenth, the struggle remained undecided, but after 1730 Dutch industry and Dutch trade began to decay. There is, perhaps, a tendency to place this decay at too early a date. Nevertheless, long before the economic decline definitely set in, English trade, fostered by the Whigs, had overshadowed Dutch trade with, as a result, a decrease of the intensity of the competition [1]. The seventeenth century saw three Dutch wars, the eighteenth century only one. Altogether two centuries of trade competition led to less than ten years of warfare between England and Holland. As regards the Southern Netherlands, the English and the Dutch were in perfect agreement when they co-operated to prevent them from entering the colonial field, or when they outvied each other in their uncommendable solicitude to keep the grass growing along the quays of once prosperous Antwerp.

Considerations of the safety of England introduced into her policy an element which made her look upon the Netherlands as something entirely different from a trade rival who had to be fought. For the defence of her coasts England could generally depend, or at least knew she

[1] Baasch, *Holländische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, p. 261, 338. Pringsheim, *Wirtschaftliche Geschichte der Ver. Niederlande*, p. 11. Blok, III, p. 374.

ought to be able to depend, upon her navy. The defence of Ireland could be considered as mainly a problem of domestic policy. The southern and eastern coasts of England, both of which face the European Continent, were naturally the most important from the point of view of defence. The south coast is high in parts, and was relatively difficult to attack. All along it, the sea was deep enough for English warships to keep guard. The landing of William III in 1688 had been possible only because the navy was friendly. The weak point in the defence of England was the flat east coast, especially that of Essex, where a landing would be easier, while the shallowness of the sea and the strength of the winds prevented warships from being kept anchored against such a contingency.

Naturally enough, those in charge of the defence of the country were bound at all times to consider from which quarter danger might threaten this exposed part of the coast. It would not be particularly difficult to hold the Narrows, and thus prevent a hostile fleet from leaving the English Channel. The danger would come from north of the Straits of Dover, from the vast estuaries of the Scheldt, the Maas and the Rhine, where transports might be collected under the shelter of the islands, wait for a favourable wind, and cross the North Sea in less than a day.

The most obvious way of countering this danger was the possession of one or more points on the Continent whence a defensive squadron might chase or even intercept the invader by making use of the same wind which favoured his enterprise. In the middle of the danger zone, the Isle of Walcheren with its harbour of Flushing seemed indicated for the purpose. Den Briel also presented advantages, and Dunkirk was held by the English for no other reason. Flushing, occupied by Elizabeth, was returned to the United Provinces by James I, who wanted money, and Dunkirk, acquired for the last time by Cromwell, was sold to France by the impecunious Charles II. Gradually, the policy of keeping outposts on the Continent was losing its attraction. Even if useful strategically, these possessions were always liable to cause diplomatic entanglements. And unless the device of protecting one's bridgeheads by further conquests is followed, the bridgeheads merely increase the number of vulnerable points that have to be defended.

Long before they had finally made up their minds about the use of bridgeheads in the Netherlands, the English had become convinced that the crucial question of safety depended primarily on the occupants themselves of these threatening coasts. The best precaution was to prevent them from being entirely in the possession of a State which occupied a preponderant position in Europe. This principle naturally became only gradually formulated. Until the latter part of the sixteenth century the Netherlands had always been part of a larger whole, and England had made no effort to modify this situation. However, when the Netherlands made their first attempt to obtain independence, during the reign of Elizabeth, their rebellion against Spain, the dominant continental power, could not have been other than welcome. There was, nevertheless, no attempt at intervention until the successes of the Duke of Parma made it look possible that Spain might re-conquer the whole of the Netherlands. Then Elizabeth sent Leicester with an army to protect the provinces that were still holding out. As Spain lost her dominant position on the Continent, the problem of the Netherlands lost its importance in the eyes of England. James I, who had become more friendly towards Spain, found it possible to discuss with the Spanish Ambassador in 1620 a plan for the division of the Northern Netherlands between Spain and England. It is significant, however, that James chose as his share the estuaries and the sea coast: in other words, the provinces of Holland and Zeeland.

From the middle of the seventeenth century, France became the danger to European equilibrium. This fact was to dominate the political history of the world for over a century and a half. It threw England and Holland

together in their common desire to keep the French out of the Southern Netherlands. There is no need, in this introduction, to follow in detail the whole course of events, in order to point out how the political-strategic factor, which made for collaboration, remained at work and usually overshadowed the economic factor, which made for divergence between England and the Dutch Republic.

The situation which existed in the eighteenth century was completely in agreement with English interests. Holland was independent, but not likely to be dangerous. The Southern Netherlands belonged to Austria, which, while not the dominant military power on the Continent, was strong enough to keep them out of the hands of France, the principal power. When this satisfactory state of affairs came to an end as the result of the French conquest of the Southern Netherlands, England feared for her safety and fought the French. The extension of the French conquest to Holland only increased England's determination to resist. But it was not necessarily at the re-establishment of the previous situation that England aimed. Any arrangement which kept the main part of the continental shores of the North Sea free from the French appeared acceptable. We shall see how the solution for which British statesmen worked during the period of the French wars varied according to circumstances. The main principle only, that of preventing France from maintaining her sway over the whole of the Netherlands, was always kept in view.

Some subsidiary principles had grown in the shadow of the main doctrine. Between secondary powers which might claim the possession of the shores of the Low Countries preference would naturally be given to a friendly one. Also, the guardian of the bridgehead, though not the holder of a continental hegemony, ought to be strong enough to defend it until Great Britain could assist him. This is why it appeared desirable that the Government of Holland should be stable. These ideas appear very clearly in the policy pursued by England during the crisis of 1786 when the Dutch Stadholder, William V of

Orange, was driven out of The Hague by his adversaries, the party of the "Patriots" who were friendly to France [1]. The support given to the Stadholder aimed not only at defeating the French influence in Holland, but also, after he had been restored with the aid of Prussian arms, at making his position is the Republic more solid than it had been before. The old constitution was guaranteed by Great Britain and Prussia.

How averse Great Britain was to any disturbance of the established sovereignties in the Netherlands can be seen from her attitude towards the rebellion of the Southern Netherlands against the Emperor Joseph II in 1789. For a short time, an independent local government was established in Brussels. The Belgian conservative leader, Van der Noot, placed before Pitt and before Van de Spiegel, the Dutch grand pensionary, some alternative plans for the settlement of the Belgian question. One alternative was that the Southern Netherlands should become an independent Republic, with a constitution similar to that of the Dutch Republic, and with the second son of the Dutch Stadholder for its Stadholder. The other plan was that the Southern Netherlands should be joined to the Dutch Republic, though it is probable that Van der Noot himself did not favour the latter solution [2].

The Dutch were not inclined to any adventures in foreign policy. But the British were scarcely more inclined to novelty than the Dutch. They may, for one brief moment, have favoured the union of the two countries, in the form of a new electorate in the German Empire, in order to strengthen them both against French aggression [3]. But the union of these two exhausted territories would not have given them any real strength, and the best manner of assuring the defence of the Southern Netherlands was still to make Austria responsible for them. Annexation of Belgium by France would have meant war with

[1] *Cambridge History of Br. For. Pol*, I, p. 157—177. Malmesbury, *Diaries and Correspondence, II*, passim.
[2] *Ged.* I, p. 137 sqq.
[3] A report of La Luzerne, Sept. 29th, 1789, quoted in Sorel, *Révolution*, II, p. 60.

England [1], but as long as Austria remained the sovereign of the Southern Netherlands, France could not seize them without becoming involved in a war with the Empire. This remained the best guarantee, in England's eyes, and Van der Noot was given no encouragement.

D. — *Great Britain and the Netherlands during the Wars of the Revolution and the Empire*

The negotiations of 1813 to 1815 cannot be understood without some knowledge of what passed during the time of the French domination in the Netherlands. This review may be usefully prefaced by a brief summary of the events by which French rule was established in those territories.

Austrian rule was restored in the Southern Netherlands without much difficulty by the new Emperor Leopold in 1790, owing to the dissensions between Conservatives and Democrats. But in 1792 the French under Dumouriez invaded the Southern Netherlands and defeated the Austrians at Jemappes, whereupon the Convention annexed these territories by decree. In 1793 the Convention declared war simultaneously against Great Britain and the Dutch Stadholder. A first invasion of Holland took place in 1793, and after a setback in 1794 the French definitely occupied the territory of the Dutch Republic in January 1795. The Stadholder William V fled to England, the Constitution guaranteed in 1788 collapsed, and the Republic was reconstructed as the Batavian Republic. France, however, annexed Maastricht, Venloo, and Dutch Flanders, and exacted crushing financial terms from the Batavian Republic, which was compelled to ally itself with France against Great Britain.

There is no need to follow the constitutional story of this Batavian Republic, which almost every year became more similar in its organisation to its French ally, while French influence and French domination continued to increase. Gradually Holland lost her overseas possessions

[1] Pitt's basis for a communication to Prussia, August 1789, *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, p. 187—8.

to England. In 1802 the Batavian Republic made peace with Great Britain, at the same time as the French did, at Amiens. In 1803, however, together with the French, the Batavians found themselves again at war with the British.

The scene shifted again in 1805, when Schimmelpenninck became grand pensionary and was invested with almost royal powers. His enjoyment of power was of short duration: in 1806 Holland became a kingdom under Napoleon's brother Louis and in 1810 there came an end even to this semblance of independence, when the whole of Holland was annexed to France.

No doubt can exist as to the spirit in which the French had thrown themselves upon the Netherlands. There may have been a few moments of uncertainty. In 1789, Philippe d'Orléans may have dreamed of obtaining for himself the crown of Belgium [1] or Camille Desmoulins may have planned to unite a liberated Holland to a liberated Belgium as a United States which would be a client-state of France. The National Assembly may, on May 22nd, 1790, have voted in favour of the renunciation by the French nation of every kind of conquest; but papal Avignon, in the heart of France, was coveted almost before this proclamation had been promulgated. The Convention did not suffer from the idealism of its predecessor: it was the direct and conscious heir of the foreign policy of the Kings of France. The policy of the natural frontiers formed the basis of its diplomacy. Before even these frontiers were reached, the Convention had realised that they could only be held if they were protected by a rampart of subservient states [2]. In 1793 Cambon wrote to the Convention that the Dutch were to to be called upon to "free themselves", and would be treated as enemies if they refused [3].

[1] Sorel, I, p. 57. *Ibid.* p. 54.
[2] Sorel, III, p. 208.
[3] Sorel, III, p. 312. Dr. Holland Rose rejects Sorel's view that there is no fundamental difference between the wars of the Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. These alone were real wars of conquest, he judges, and they began with the *coup d'état* of Fructidor (*Camb. Hist. Br. For.*

If all the old traditions of the *guerres communes* launched the French armies towards the Rhine, if the traditions of the *guerres de magnificence* drove them beyond it and into the heart of Holland, there were other reasons as well that directed their enterprise. However impoverished, the Dutch could still be made to pay tribute, and their territory was a desirable market for *assignats*. But there was yet another motive for conquest: the desire to use the North Sea coast as a jumping-off ground in the struggle against England. In his great speech of March 10th, 1793, Danton called the English Cabinet the central point of the enemies' movements. "Prenons la Hollande", he exclaimed, "et Carthage est à nous" [1], a piece of rhetoric destined to live and to be taken over by another enemy of England one hundred and twenty years later. Meanwhile, it was taken up by the Dutch revolutionary Anacharsis Clootz who, in September 1793, declared before the Convention that the possession of the mouth of the Rhine was essential to the happiness of France: "It is in Holland that we shall destroy Carthage. From the Texel our revolutionary squadrons will sail" [2] And in 1795 General Sauviac wrote from the Hague to the Comité de Salut Public that the possession of Dutch harbours was precious because from them it would be possible to land upon various parts of the English coast [3].

Needless to say, Great Britain followed the events on the other side of the North Sea with the closest attention. As soon as France attacked the Netherlands, it became certain that war must break out sooner or later. War was

Pol., I, p. 281). But Dr. Rose's theory does not explain how the French came to establish themselves in Holland in 1795. From the moment they annexed that country in all but name, they had embarked upon a war of conquest, and had elected to follow the Charlemagne tradition rather than that of the Gaul of Caesar. Until her annexation by France in 1810, Holland enjoyed a large though decreasing share of local self-government; but from the international point of view she was a mere dependency of France. Cf. Van Hamel, *Nederland tusschen de Mogendheden*, pp. 318—325.

[1] Sorel, III, p. 344.
[2] Sorel, III, p. 477.
[3] *Ged.* I, p. 596.

unwelcome to Pitt — it would interfere with his schemes for financial reform, rendered so necessary by the American war of Independence. It was far also from the thought of the British nation, plunged into one of its deep moods of insularity [1]. But the question was one which allowed of no hesitation. It is true Pitt chose his moment and chose the occasion too. The execution of Louis XVI and the bogey of Jacobinism were useful for their effect on public opinion [2]. George III, like Burke, saw in the war which broke out in 1793 a war of ideas, a war between Republicanism and Monarchism. But for Pitt and for his foreign secretary Grenville the war was a struggle for the balance of power, which was being disturbed just at the spot where it was most essential for England that it should be preserved. Already in 1792, when Talleyrand had tried to obtain a promise of neutrality from England in the event of a French invasion of the Southern Netherlands, he was given this reply: "The Pays-Bas form the chain which unites England to the Continent, and the central knot of our relations to Austria and Russia. It would be broken if it belonged to France [3]".

From 1793 to his death, the main principle of Pitt's policy continued to be that of saving Holland and even the Southern Netherlands from France [4]. He remained an opportunist, always ready to change his plan provided the main principle was safeguarded [5]. In 1795, he aimed at a restoration of Habsburg rule in the Southern Netherlands. About the end of that year the prospects of peace seemed rather favourable, and a certain readiness to negotiate was displayed in the King's Speech. Eden, the British Ambassador in Vienna, was directed to give an explanation of British policy and to point out that the restoration of the Southern Netherlands to Austria was

[1] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, p. 211—212.
[2] *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, VIII, p. 304—5.
[3] Holland Rose, *Pitt and the Great War*, p. 48.
[4] *Ibid., passim*, but particularly pp. 100 sqq., and also Holland Rose, *Pitt and the National Revival*, pp. 305—6.
[5] Holland Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, pp. 79—80.

considered to be the first plan in any pacification [1]. It was proposed to return these provinces to Austria, with the addition of the Bishopric of Liège and of the southern parts of the United Provinces recently acquired by France. Great Britain also proposed the re-establishment of the Stadholderate in the United Provinces. But the growing disinclination of Austria to be burdened once more with these compromising Southern Netherlands, and an emphatic declaration of the Directoire against their cession, put an end to the plan.

The year 1796 was not less prolific of peace plans. Exchanges continued between London and Vienna. As Prussia, who had made her separate peace with France at Basle on April 5th, 1795, was causing serious concern by her doubtful attitude, the British government played for a time with the idea of offering her the Southern Netherlands. The one thing indispensable was that these provinces should be placed "in a situation of as little dependence as possible on France" [2]. Lord Malmesbury, the former Sir James Harris, was sent to Paris in order to open negotiations, with a view to securing once more the return of the Southern Netherlands to Austria. Provided they were separated from France, it mattered little to whom they were to go [3]. On December 19th, however, the Directoire declared its irrevocable resolve to keep Belgium and the Rhine boundary, and sent Malmesbury back to England.

Three of the twenty years of the wars of the Revolution had passed. British policy and the general course of events had taken the shape which they were to preserve

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[2] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, p. 268.

[3] Grenville to Eden, Nov. 7th, 1796. "H.M. wants Belgium back in Austria's hands, *if solidly held*; for this too is a link of union between Great Britain and Austria. But even that exchange [for Bavaria] would be duly considered by H.M. as an item in the negotiation if desired by Austria; and the Pays Bas [Belgium] should be in hands able to defend them against France. This is essential to the balance of Europe. Prussia is the only power except Austria that could hold them." *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.* I, Appendix D.

until the end. All the problems that would confront the statesmen on 1813 were in existence and waiting for solution. In 1796, as in 1813, the most urgent question before the government of England was that of keeping the Alliance in being, and of preventing defections. Sacrifices in money and sacrifices of policy were made, because the Alliance was the only way that could lead to the realisation of part at least of the aims for which England was fighting. Only less evident because the Alliance remained the first concern, was the principle of the European balance, and its main application from the point of view of England, the question of the ownership of the eastern shores of the North Sea. And, struggling for pre-eminence with the question of the European balance, there was the colonial question, the question of Empire.

It was not long before the conflict had also assumed the aspect of a colonial war. War with France naturally resulted in a British attack upon her colonies. But as soon as Holland was drawn into the French sphere of influence, Great Britain was bound to give attention to the Dutch colonies also. From the Cape of Good Hope the French might have attacked India, and there was not the slightest likelihood that they would have failed to utilise the other Dutch colonies if the opportunity of sallying from these against some of the scattered parts of the British Empire had offered itself. Any form of war therefore necessitated the conquest of the colonies of France and of her allies by England, and it stands to reason that the eventual return of these colonies on the conclusion of peace could only depend on the nature of the peace. Were the colonies to be returned to a state which remained at the mercy of France, especially of a France that did not offer guarantees of stability and of pacific intention, they would remain a potential threat, and might have to be re-conquered at great expense on some future occasion. If, therefore, in 1796, Great Britain entertained the idea of returning only a very limited part of the conquered colonies to Holland, this policy does not deserve to be called "shabby", to use the word of Dr. Holland

Rose [1]. Her action at the Peace of Amiens was equally justifiable. The retention of certain Dutch colonies after the fall of Napoleon is a different matter.

The really interesting fact remains that in the early years of the war the question of the return of the colonies had already assumed the complexion it was to wear in 1813. The statesmen of 1813 were fully aware of the thoughts that agitated the minds of their predecessors in the nineties of the eighteenth century. That is precisely why these thoughts have such an importance from our point of view. And the attitude of Great Britain's Allies to the problem was equally fixed from those early years. They were never able to see it in its true light. For the Allies, the conquered colonies were pawns that could be bartered for the territories they had lost in Europe. The outlook of the Allies was much more European than that of England. They were, to use the word in its modern sense, with all its various connotations, unable to think "imperially".

The failure of Malmesbury's mission did not put an end to thoughts of peace, at least in the mind of Pitt. The war had not yet acquired that character of desperate finality which marked it after the brief interlude of Amiens, and English diplomacy was still willing to explore every possible avenue of peace. Already in April 1797 new suggestions were sent to Eden, the British Ambassador in Vienna, who was allowed to consent to and even to advise the cession of the Southern Netherlands to France [2]. He could in any case not have done more than consent, for on April 18th Austria was signing with France the preliminaries of the Peace of Leoben, which recognised the definitive acquisition of the Southern Netherlands by France. When later, in July of the same year, Malmesbury was sent to Lille as plenipotentiary to negotiate a peace, he was empowered among other things to consent to the retention by France of her "constitutional" frontiers, which included the Southern Netherlands. The negotiations of Lille

[1] *Camb. Hist. Brit. For. Pol.* I, p. 268.
[2] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, pp. 274 sqq., and Appendix D, passim.

broke down, the coup d'état of Fructidor removed all possibility of an agreement. But the fact remains that on this occasion Great Britain had shown herself ready to allow the French to remain in possession of the Southern Netherlands.

This was a striking departure from traditional British policy in the Netherlands. On the one hand it is not possible to explain the whole episode away as a mere diplomatic feint. Pitt certainly wanted peace. He was war-weary, as well he might be, in view of the situation which confronted him at home. The financial position of England was highly unsatisfactory, Ireland was in turmoil, and the opposition to the war was growing, as was evident from the figures of succeeding divisions in Parliament [1]. There had been serious mutinies in the fleet at Spithead and at the Nore. The situation abroad was no more satisfactory. Austria was reduced to impotence and soon actually fell out of the Alliance. Grenville may have been less peacefully inclined, but he also was sincere in his efforts for peace, as has been finally established by the documents from the Foreign Office Records published in the *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*.

On the other hand it remains true that the peace-feelers of 1796—97 did not represent the real wishes of British statesmanship, and that British ministers fully realised that they were diverging from traditional policy by agreeing to the establishment of the French along the North Sea shores as far as the Scheldt. In any case, however sincere they may have been, they were certainly in an unhappy frame of mind, and themselves reluctant about the proposed concession of the Southern Netherlands. It is not surprising that their divided minds gave rise to misgivings about their sincerity. Of these misgivings, whether justified or not, we have a very striking proof in a letter from a British agent in Holland to Grenville. This agent,

[1] In 1797, almost every city, county, and town of note in England and Ireland had petitioned the King for the removal of his ministers, and "the consequent return of peace". Smart, *Economic Annals*, I, p. 1.

Barclay, who, owing to his professed republicanism, had been allowed to stay in Holland since the beginning of the Revolution, had been on a visit to England about the month of July 1797 [1]. On August 18th he wrote a report for Grenville of conversations he had had with leading Dutch politicians. In these conversations he had stated most emphatically that the English were quite sincere, "because, Mylord, I can exist here only, but by constantly adhering to our sincerity to obtain peace" [2]. The whole letter shows clearly that Barclay did not believe in this sincerity, and that he did not expect Grenville to believe in it either.

George III, in any case, knew his own mind. Although he agreed, in view of the consensus of opinion of his ministers, to an arrangement which was in opposition to the traditional British policy in the Netherlands, he certainly did not approve of it. And there is no reason to believe that he and his ministers considered the proposed settlement to be a final one [3].

Left without illusions as to the possibility of any peace that was not a complete renunciation on their part, the British ministers, before the end of 1797, had turned all their thoughts towards a successful prosecution of the war. Bonaparte's threat to the English coasts, which was taken most seriously in England, only served to emphasise the importance of a satisfactory solution of the problem of the Netherlands. It is at this period that the idea of uniting the two parts of the Netherlands into a single state which would form a barrier to French expansion in the north began to take shape.

[1] *Ged.* II, p. 325.
[2] *Ged.* II, p. 382.
[3] Such, at any rate, was the view taken by the Dutch Orangists. Henry Fagel, ex-*greffier* of the States General, wrote to the wife of the ex-Stadholder: "I have no doubt that England will always remain disposed to strive for the liberation of our unhappy country from the hands of France as soon as more favourable circumstances will allow the thought of such efforts" (Dec. 29th, 1977, *Ged.* II, pp. 987—8). We may well believe with Fagel that if Great Britain had made a peace of renunciation in 1797, she would not have resigned herself to it indefinitely.

Before Pitt and his colleagues were converted to this solution, the alternative of giving the Southern Netherlands to Prussia, which had been favoured in 1795, once more flitted through the minds of diplomats. England was striving hard to restore the coalition. In November 1797 Frederick William II of Prussia died, and his son Frederick William III succeeded him. For some time it was thought that he might be induced to join the enemies of France. Would not the offer of the Southern Netherlands prove a successful bait? This project would not in any way run counter to the general purpose of the war, which remained, as Grenville wrote to Eden, "that of reducing France within her ancient limits, particularly on the side of the Netherlands, and of delivering Holland and Italy from the uncontrolled dominion which she now exerts over them [1]". Although Austria had implicitly renounced all her rights to the Southern Netherlands by accepting compensation for them at the expense of the Venetian Republic, it was common knowledge that she still wanted to be considered as their rightful owner, if only for the purpose of a profitable barter in Germany [2]. The Earl of Stamford, who went to Vienna in the summer of 1798 to discuss the interests of the House of Orange with the Austrian Government, found, however, that Austria would not object to Prussia's acquiring the Southern Netherlands by conquest [3]. But Prussia would not budge, unless she were first plied with English money. Austria and Russia were similarly begging for English subsidies, and all these conflicting claims on the budget of England could not be assessed and satisfied in time for a fruitful intervention by Prussia in the Netherlands.

Already co-operation with Russia was appearing more useful and more immediately desirable to England. If anything was to be hoped from Prussia, it was to be through pressure exercised by the Czar. Paul was in the

[1] April 20th 1798, *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol*, I, Appendix E.
[2] Bussemaker, article in G. J. W. Koolemans Beynen, *Gedenkboek*, 1813, Vol. I, pp. 40 sqq.
[3] Stamford to the Prince of Orange, June 30th, 1798. (*Ged.* II, pp. 1006 sqq.).

right frame of mind for a successful approach: the sore created by the French capture of Malta had become exacerbated when the Knights of that Island made him their Grand Master. The Grand Master without an island showed the most laudable martial spirit, and proved ready to entertain every suggestion for the reduction of France to her ancient limits. As far as the Netherlands were concerned, the plan put before the Russian Emperor was the re-establishment of the Stadholderate in a really independent Holland, to which would be joined the Southern Netherlands. In his despatch of November 16th, 1798 [1] Grenville explained to Whitworth, the Ambassador in Petersburg, that as the return of the Southern Netherlands to Austria was probably out of the question, it became necessary to consider what plan would be most effective in providing for the defence of "this highly important barrier against the future encroachment of France". "None has here occurred which is thought equally effectual and practicable", wrote Grenville, "as the uniting of those provinces to the Dutch Republic under the administration of a Stadholder, and with such provisions as may best be adapted to the maintenance of their respective civil and religious constitutions".

This quotation makes it clear that the suggestion came from the English side: "none has here occurred". It also shows the solution of 1813—15 in embryo: the union of the two parts of the Netherlands, the Stadholderate, with an effort at least to respect the civil and religious liberties previously acquired by both parts. The proposed solution, however, was only tentative: Grenville went on to say that alternative proposals would be welcome. All that was desired was security, which was "at least equally important with any other objective in the whole range of.... negotiation [2]". It is interesting to note that the British government took some trouble to ascertain in how far such a solution would be acceptable to the inhabitants of the Southern Netherlands [3].

[1] Holland Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, pp. 55 sqq.
[2] Cf. also H. Rose, *Pitt and the Great War*, p. 371. [3] *Ged.* III, p. 431.

Russia agreed to the British plan. A provisional treaty was concluded in 1798, and renewed six months later. One of its results was an Anglo-Russian invasion of Holland in 1799. The expedition was entirely unsuccessful; the greatest triumph of the Duke of York, who was in command, consisted in obtaining leave from the French general Lebrun to quit the Dutch shores unmolested. The only aspect of the campaign which is of interest from the point of view of British policy is the disappointment of the invaders' hope of support from the Orange party in Holland. With the exception of their fleet, the main portion of which surrendered to the English at the Helder, the Batavians hardly stirred in favour of the House of Orange. This lack of enthusiasm, and the good defence put up by the Batavian army, may have influenced British diplomacy, and contributed to create the atmosphere required for the peace of renunciation to which it consented at Amiens a few years later. It had a lasting influence on the mind of Grenville and caused his hostility to the Orange restoration of 1813 when he was one of the leaders of the Opposition.

At the same time it cannot be said that the fiasco of the expedition to Holland created in England a readiness to accept an immediate peace. To Bonaparte's overtures of Christmas time 1799 Grenville replied that peace would be best assured by the restoration of the Bourbons. This was surely not the policy of the whole government, and perhaps no more than a gesture from the uncompromising Foreign Secretary. The idea of peace entertained in the year 1800 did not savour of renunciation. After Marengo the British Cabinet considered the question, but as regards the Netherlands only such an arrangement was envisaged as would free them from French dominance and give to Europe some security for their future independence. Although it was realised that the re-establishment of the Stadholderate could not be insisted upon, it was judged that Holland had to be really independent, and that the Southern Netherlands were to be given up also in return for the conquered colonies. They could then

be exchanged by Austria for Bavaria or for Tuscany or given to some smaller prince under the guarantee of a big Power. They might also form an independent Republic with a constitution as similar as possible to that which existed before the French conquest [1].

But in February 1801 Pitt was obliged to resign. England was tired of the war, trade was in a very bad condition, and in March negotiations for peace were opened in London. In July already Schimmelpenninck, who was at that time Ambassador of the Batavian Republic in Paris, knew that the British ministry was weakening on the subject of the Southern Netherlands [2], and on October 1st the preliminaries of peace were signed. They left France in possession of the Southern Netherlands, while Great Britain recognised the Batavian Republic which, though nominally independent, was in reality a French dependency. There is little need to expatiate on this abandonment of the principles of British policy. Whatever Addington might declare, the country at large considered that only a truce was being signed. In March 1802 the Treaty of Amiens was finally concluded. As regards the Netherlands, it was merely a re-statement of the preliminaries of London, the only difference being further English concessions to France's Dutch ally in regard to the return of conquered colonies, and the promise of an indemnity to the House of Orange, though not at the expense of Holland [3]. The fact that England did not insist upon evacuation by the French might lead one to believe that she had completely resigned herself to leaving Holland to its own fate. But it is at least arguable that she relied upon the Franco-Dutch convention of August 1801, which specified that French troops were to remain in the territory of the Batavian Republic only up to the time of a general peace [4].

The whole story is not told when the articles of peace

[1] Bussemaker in *Gedenkboek 1813*, I, pp. 41—2.
[2] *Ged.* III, p. 630.
[3] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.* I, pp. 305—8.
[4] Rose, *Napoleon*, I, p. 405.

have been enumerated and the concessions of principle passed in review. During the years which immediately preceded the peace of Amiens, a remarkable cross-current became noticeable: there existed, as it were, a suspension of animation in the methods of warfare, which pointed very clearly to the fact that the English and the Dutch realised that France was their common enemy. The hasty surrender of the Dutch fleet to the English in 1799 was rather an instance of division among the Dutch themselves. But since 1799 the English and the Dutch had not met upon the battlefield. The economic war also showed instances of an informal truce. It happened repeatedly that when French privateers pursued neutral ships into the mouths of the Dutch rivers, English men-of-war secretly co-operated with the Dutch in order to protect them. Dutch fishing had suffered very heavily from English cruisers, but cases in which fishermen were left unmolested by the English became more frequent [1]. During the Anglo-Dutch war of 1780—84 the English had similarly shown a tendency to pay a certain regard to the nation with which they had so many interests of state in common.

Co-operation became much more marked during the peace negotiations at Amiens. The Dutch representative, Schimmelpenninck, has left an unfinished diary of his activities which sheds a highly interesting light upon those proceedings. It should be remembered that this diary was not written for publication. It bears all the traces of hasty composition and the mark of complete spontaneity. With the linguistic versatility of the Dutch, Schimmelpenninck jotted down in the original language various conversations in French, Dutch, and English in which he had taken part [2].

Schimmelpenninck's position at Amiens was certainly very peculiar. Although he represented a State which, as France's ally, was at war with Great Britain, the interests he had to defend were much more closely linked with

[1] Blok, IV, pp. 59, 61.
[2] *Ged.* IV, pp. 724 sqq.,

those of the enemy than with those of the ally. France tried to arrange a peace with Britain without allowing her own allies, Holland and Spain, to take part in the negotiations. She wanted to make her private arrangements with those allies, in whose favour England would then be unable to exercise her influence. Schimmelpenninck wished to recover for his country the town of Flushing, which the French had occupied since 1795. He rightly considered that Great Britain would support his efforts, because the French occupation of the mouths of the Scheldt was a threat to England's security. Apart from this, Schimmelpenninck wanted to terminate the Franco-Dutch alliance, and for this also he realised that he would be able to count on the support of the British.

At the same time, the idea which, according to Schimmelpenninck, had prevailed in England for the last two centuries, that no influence could be exercised in Holland except through the House of Orange, was a serious difficulty with which he had to contend. To the Batavian Government a restoration of the House of Orange in Holland was as unacceptable as to its French masters. Schimmelpenninck therefore tried, during the year which preceded the signature of the preliminaries of peace, cautiously to influence the British government, through an American emissary who was working for him in London. He also endeavoured to convince the English that Holland stood in need of whatever political independence could be obtained at the moment, especially now that by the annexation of Belgium France was her immediate neighbour. "I had the pleasure to notice the visible effect of these activities in London", writes Schimmelpenninck.

In Paris, Schimmelpenninck established secret communications with Merry, the British Commissioner who was arranging for the return of the prisoners of war. He had a personal meeting with Merry in Paris, in October 1801, but found that the sympathy that was being shown was not likely to take the shape of active support. A subsequent conversation with the British negotiator

Cornwallis in Paris confirmed this impression. Schimmelpenninck was told that a continuation of the war by Britain could only make matters worse, now that the coalition had been completely broken up. "I always attach an incredibly great importance in disputing Belgium to France, not for the country in itself, but because of the expansion of its coast and of the immediate influence which the reunion of that country to France must have on that Republic" (i. e. France), said Cornwallis, thus re-stating the British policy in the Netherlands in its most undiluted form, at the very moment when Britain was preparing to give it up. Cornwallis's utterance is only another proof of the reluctance of British statesmen to make the sacrifice, and a further indication of their knowledge that the settlement of Amiens could only be of a provisional nature.

At Amiens, Schimmelpenninck manoeuvred to the best of his ability in order to be admitted to the negotiations, and co-operated systematically, though secretly, with Cornwallis. Hawkesbury, who had succeeded Grenville as Foreign Secretary, told the Dutch representative of the House of Orange in London that Cornwallis was very pleased with Schimmelpenninck, who was showing himself very anti-French and doing all he could to re-establish a good understanding between Holland and England [1]. Schimmelpenninck in the end was admitted to the negotiations, but not before England and France had already come to an agreement on all the main points.

Notwithstanding some further successes, this time as a mediator between the French and the English, at a moment when the conference threatened to break off, Schimmelpenninck failed in his main efforts. He obtained nothing more than a solemn — and empty — declaration from Talleyrand and Joseph Bonaparte that the First Consul would be prepared to negotiate with Holland after the conclusion of the final treaty. For us, the fact of real significance is that, while still nominally enemies, the

[1] H. Fagel to the Princess of Orange, February 9th, 1802. (*Ged.* IV p. 671).

British and the Dutch throughout the negotiations at Amiens were aware of a community of interests against France.

After the conclusion of the peace the British Government tried, at any rate, to uphold their country's traditional policy in the Netherlands in so far as the treaty allowed it, by making efforts to obtain the evacuation of Holland by the French armies. In the second set of instructions given to the British Ambassador Whitworth on his departure for Paris (November 14th, 1802), he was ordered to make moderate but firm remonstrances against the continued occupation of Holland by the French [1]. But public opinion in England was far more stirred by Napoleon's more spectacular oppression of Switzerland than by that of Holland, while British diplomacy gave most of its attention to the Eastern question and to Malta. Napoleon meanwhile acted in such a manner as to make the British more than ever alive to the danger likely to arise from the possession of the eastern shores of the North Sea by a strong and unfriendly power. Far from withdrawing the army of occupation from Holland, he was sending more troops into that country, as an obvious preparation for an eventual landing in England. In the course of negotiations which took place shortly before the renewed outbreak of hostilities, Hawkesbury sent a note to Whitworth in which, among other demands to be made to France, he included once more the evacuation of Holland [2].

War was declared on May 18th, 1803. Although Malta still was ostensibly the principal matter in dispute, the British declaration of war was due to the desire of the British Government to forestal their adversary. Their action was very truly of a defensive nature. The same men who had consented to the peace of renunciation of 1802 were now compelled to take up arms, once more, for reasons of security. As such, the question of the North Sea shore was bound to come up for consideration, and the

[1] Rose, *Napoleon*, I, p. 404.
[2] April 4th. Rose, *Napoleon* I, p. 420.

problem of the Netherlands was not long in acquiring again the importance which British statesmanship was wont to attach to it. With a view to settling this question by indirect means, the British Government, almost immediately on the outbreak of the war, offered to respect the neutrality of Holland, on condition that French troops evacuated the Dutch fortresses, and that France consented not to exact any ships, men, or money from the Batavian Republic [1]. This offer was, naturally, refused by Napoleon.

The war was now assuming the aspect which it would retain until the final settlement. England and France, standing on different planes, were fencing in the void. With all his territorial conquests, Napoleon could not defeat his enemy until he broke her trade. And all their colonial conquests notwithstanding, the English could not deal the death-blow to France unless they acquired continental allies who could fight France in her own element. France was preparing the double-edged weapon of the continental blockade, which was going to alienate from her most of her allies. England was compelled to keep in the background the war aims which mattered most to her, in order to gather allies, and to keep the alliance going once it was started. Pitt, and after him Castlereagh, were going to be confronted with this problem, and even during the negotiations which followed the downfall of Napoleon, Castlereagh was not free from its obsession. Much will be understood that may seem obscure at first sight, if we remember how constant was the care of British statesmen to keep in being the alliance without which even their most important war aims could not be realised.

England first turned to Russia as to the most desirable ally. But Napoleon, who wanted to impress the French nation by displaying a willingness to come to terms, while he hoped at the same time for Russia's assistance in the blockade of England, was also courting Russia. Thus both belligerents accepted Russia's offer of mediation, although neither believed that there was the remotest

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 433.

chance of success for Alexander's efforts. The conditions for peace that were debated in the course of the insincere negotiations that followed have therefore only an academic interest, and the question of their real authorship need not be considered [1]. We have only to take note of the fact that, among the peace terms which the British ministers considered to be necessary was the creation of a Kingdom of the Netherlands consisting of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, which would be placed under Prussian protection.

Whatever expectations British ministers may have entertained as the result of their statement of terms concerning the Netherlands these terms were in actual fact those they wanted to obtain. When their successors were able, ten years afterwards, to settle the question of the Netherlands almost completely in accordance with their own wishes, they applied the formula of 1803. The main difference was that the protection of the new State was not entrusted to Prussia. The part which British governments ascribed to Prussia in the Netherlands, on various occasions between the resumption of the war and its final conclusion, varied in inverse ratio with the fluctuating importance of Prussia. The idea was always that of the Barrier in the widest sense of the word: somebody was to be placed as a sentinel between France and the eastern shores of the North Sea.

It is during the extensive negotiations accompanying the Russian attempt at mediation that the idea of a crowned monarchy as the form of government in the future United Netherlands made its appearance for the first time. Monarchism, at that moment, was in the ascendant. England and Russia were almost passionately monarchist as a result of the French Revolution. In France, the Consulate was a monarchy in all but name, and Holland itself was now governed by a "grand pensionary" whose rule was tempered only by the will of his master, Napoleon.

The war had not lasted long before Russia, who was,

[1] Cf. Sorel, *Révolution*, VI, pp. 315—324.

with England and France, the power whose interests and ambitions were least localised, saw that the attitude of dilettante detachment would not repay her in the end, in face of Napoleon's growing ambition. In May 1804, Napoleon had become Emperor of the French, and Pitt had returned to power, two facts which symbolised the earnestness of a struggle from which Russia could no longer hold aloof. The circumstances which made Tsar Alexander choose the side of England need not be related here, but the negotiations of 1805 which led to the new alliance are of the highest importance in relation to the present review of events.

At the end of 1804 the Russians outlined a set of peace terms which might form the common aim of the alliance that was in the making. France was to be restrained within just limits [1], but for the details of this arrangement only very tentative suggestions were made. It may be noted in passing that the possibility of Prussia's acquiring not only the Southern Netherlands, but even Holland, was envisaged by the Russians. The result was a long note from the British Government to the Russian Envoy in London, Novossiltzoff, dated January 19th, 1805. This note has for us the highest significance [2]. It was the result of a survey of European affairs made by Pitt during his retirement while the cares of office did not weigh upon him, and he was able to look at things in a detached spirit [3]. It came nearer to Pitt's most fundamental conceptions than any of his previous pronouncements on European re-organisation.

Even at this moment, however, Pitt remained a realist. His proposals were not put in an absolutely rigid form, and allowed of considerable elasticity, their final application being made dependent on the extent of the victory. They were concerned with the whole of Europe: the Netherlands were one only among the many points touched upon. We cannot, therefore, make out what place, in

[1] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, p. 335.

[2] The note is published in Webster, *British Diplomacy* 1813—15, pp. 392 sqq. and previously in *Ged.* IV.

[3] Sorel, VI, p. 336.

Pitt's complete programme, the question of the eastern shore of the North Sea occupied. Such a definition of the importance of the problem in relation to other peace problems cannot be made with any certainty before the actual negotiations which took place at the end of the Napoleonic wars. At the same time, we find, even at this period, a differentiation between arrangements of which the importance is primary, and those which are only of secondary importance. First in the enumeration of primary objects comes the re-establishment of the Dutch Republic. It is one of the countries which "are capable of being restored to their former independence, and of being placed in a situation in which they can protect it".

There are other countries, however, "where either the ancient relations of the country are so completely destroyed that they cannot be restored, or where independence would be merely nominal and alike inconsistent with the security for the country itself, or for Europe". The Southern Netherlands belong to this category [1]. "Events have put out of the question their return to the House of Austria". The only events which Pitt can have had in mind were those by which Austria had proved herself unable to defend the Southern Netherlands against France. But these countries "evidently can never exist separate and independent", obviously for the same reason: they cannot defend themselves against France.

Pitt proposed a graduated series of solutions of the problem of the Southern Netherlands, which varied according to the degree of the defeat which might be inflicted upon France, but with a further variation which took into account the claims that might arise as a result of services rendered by Allies.

The first hypothesis was that of a complete victory which would make it possible to reduce France within her ancient limits. This would place the Southern Netherlands at the disposal of the Allies who could allot them as they pleased. The best way of securing the Southern

[1] In the whole of this despatch the word "Netherlands" is used for the Southern Netherlands.

Netherlands would then be to annex a considerable part of them to Prussia, and to place Holland "in a second line of defence". Holland would acquire "as an additional Barrier.... the part of Flanders lying within a military line to be drawn from Antwerp to the Meuse at Maestricht". This wording, which is nothing if not vague, would have made the southern frontier of Holland coincident with the old boundary of Zeeland-Flanders, thence to follow the right side of the Scheldt to Antwerp, from which a line would be drawn to Maastricht. It would be a "military line", not a straight or ideal line, but one which could be more easily defended. Probably, therefore, it would have followed the course of the river Nethe, as there are no other geographical features in this region which could provide a military line. The increase to Holland would therefore consist of about four-fifths of the present Belgian provinces of Antwerp and Limburg.

The Prussians were to acquire the remainder of the Southern Netherlands, including the Bishopric of Liège, as well as the other territories between Meuse and Moselle. There was nothing in this plan which did not fit in with Pitt's general scheme regarding the Netherlands. It was the continuation of the policy which consisted in placing a sentinel on the northern frontier of France, thereby relieving Britain from the compromising necessity of occupying the bridgehead herself. The idea was clearly that of preventing any direct contact between France and Holland. France could then enter into possession of the whole eastern shore of the North Sea only by going to war with Prussia.

The aggrandisement of Prussia in the Southern Netherlands was to be dependent upon two conditions. The first was the consent of the Tsar. If this were withheld England would concur, "*though not without reluctance*", in any other arrangement by which the increase of Holland at the expense of the Southern Netherlands would be larger, and that of Prussia proportionately less considerable. It may be asked what was the reason of this reluctance. It would be difficult to believe that at this juncture there

could have been any fear of Holland's acquiring too great a power. The real reason was fear of France. A complete defeat such as that of Napoleon in 1814 could not be foreseen. In a further part of the note Pitt discussed the question of the restoration of the Bourbons in France, an event which, however desirable, he thought extremely unlikely. It could in his view in no case justify a prolongation of the war "if a Peace could be obtained on the principles which have been stated". Pitt, then, envisaged a peace settlement with Napoleon, a settlement, therefore, where the question of security would be paramount. How could he have wished, in such a case, to entrust the defence of a large part of the Southern Netherlands to Holland?

The second condition for the aggrandisement of Prussia in the Southern Netherlands was her active co-operation in the war. If she held aloof, she was not to expect any profit. It is a remarkable proof of the importance attached to Prussian assistance that the contingency of her abstention coincided in Pitt's view with the hypothesis of an incomplete victory over France. In such an event Pitt envisaged the continuance of the French occupation of the Southern Netherlands with the exception of the portion already described which, he thought, ought in any case to go to Holland. This arrangement would still, though less perfectly, have been in agreement with the fundamental principles of England in the Netherlands: the whole of their coast would not have been in those powerful hands against which they had to be protected.

Pitt's programme was precisely that adopted by England in December 1813, when Castlereagh went to the Continent to obtain for liberated Holland an extension of territory including Antwerp, and to try to place Austria, or, if she proved unwilling, Prussia, between Holland and France. If this scheme was not adopted, it was owing to causes which we shall in due course try to determine. But the British Government of 1814 and 1815 considered the solution that was eventually adopted as no more than a second best. Pitt also reverted to the old policy of the

barrier by his suggestion that the security of Holland might be further assured by an arrangement between Holland, Great Britain, and Russia to maintain at all times an army "on such a footing as may be thought necessary to provide for their defence against sudden attacks". The King of England, in his capacity of Elector of Hanover, would defray part of the expense of maintaining an adequate garrison for fortresses then existing or thereafter to be established.

In the negotiations that followed Pitt's communication to Novossiltzoff of January 19th, Great Britain continued to put forward the idea of Prussian aggrandisement in the Southern Netherlands, partly no doubt in order to give this Power an equivalent for Hanover, on which Frederick William III was casting a covetous eye. In Mulgrave's despatch to Gower, the British Ambassador at Petersburg, all that was asked for Holland was independence and "further provision for its future security by the establishment of a sufficient barrier towards the Flemish frontier" [1]. In the draft treaty, sent to Gower on March 15th, the real views of the British Cabinet were expressed again in terms much vaguer than those of the note to Novossiltzoff. An effectual barrier along the Rhine was deemed necessary, and the allotment of the lands on the left bank of the Rhine was to depend partly on the needs of the barrier policy, and partly on the exertions of the confederate power.

Meanwhile, the Emperor Alexander was making it very clear that he did not wish to help Prussia in the acquisition of further territory. Czartoryski was actively preaching his anti-Prussian doctrines to the Tsar, and was meeting with success. This trend of Russia's policy was clearly shown in the form finally taken by the treaty of alliance. When it was signed on April 11th 1805, it stipulated, as far as the Netherlands are concerned, for the independence of Holland in any case, the restoration of the House of Orange to depend on the degree of victory and the power of the Allies to impose their views at the

[1] Jan. 21st, 1805. Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, p. 66.

time of the settlement, as well as on the wishes of the inhabitants. The fate of the Southern Netherlands was equally to depend on the degree of victory. In the case of a negotiated peace, the minimum required was the cession to the Dutch Republic of the territory between the Maas and the Scheldt north of a line from Antwerp to Maastricht, and freedom for Holland to establish fortified places along that line. But in the case of a decisive victory a barrier of some sort would be established on the north of France, one way to effect this being the addition of the former Austrian Netherlands to Holland [1].

This was a considerable diminution of the chances of Prussia. Even so, an important inducement was held out to her: Luxemburg, the Bishopric of Liège, and the country between Moselle, Rhine, and Maas. In any case, even after the conclusion of the treaty with Russia, the British Government did not consider itself debarred from making further offers to Prussia. Alexander's diplomacy remained in many respects amateurish, always fluctuating with the various personal influences to which he was open. The notion which attracted him most was that of succeeding Napoleon as Continental dictator, and in certain of his moods he would have preferred to have none but the distant English to take into account when the moment for re-drawing the map of Europe arrived. The British Government, on the other hand, always sternly realistic, knew the strength of the enemy and saw the necessity for gathering every possible ally into the fold. In the case of Prussia, moreover, the question was not only that of gaining an ally, but of preventing a country whose attitude was so uncertain from becoming an enemy.

The Southern Netherlands were, therefore, again dangled before the eyes of Prussia. In October England offered them to Prussia, together with the intermediary districts that would join them to her old territory. In accordance with the rather startling system of open dealing and loyalty to her allies which Great Britain followed throughout

[1] Bussemaker in *Gedenkboek, 1813*, I, p. 43 sqq. *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, p. 341.

the Napoleonic wars, it was stipulated in this offer that it was subject to the Tsar's approval. Circumstances, about the end of the year, were shaping in such a way that there could no longer be any doubt as to this approval. The Austrians had been defeated at Ulm, and Prussia acquired further importance in the calculations of the opponents of France. The result was that in November the King of Prussia obtained extremely favourable terms from the Tsar, which included even the latter's approval of a Prussian annexation of Hanover. When this news was received in England, the effect on Pitt was staggering. George III attached such importance to his electorate that it was considered advisable not to communicate this intelligence to him. Efforts to gain Prussia for the coalition by satisfying her greed otherwise than by the offer of Hanover appeared more urgently necessary than ever before. How far was Britain prepared to go in these efforts? The question has, up to the present, not been finally settled. We have the statement of Hardenberg that Harrowby, who was then on a mission to Berlin, offered Holland to Prussia. Startling though this departure would have been, we should remark at once that even if the offer did take place, it would not have been a renunciation of the fundamental principle of British policy in the Netherlands. By establishing Prussia along the Netherlands shores Britain would have prevented the preponderant and dominating continental power from occupying them. Those shores would have been in the hands of a state which was an ally, and which, as far as human foresight could be expected to reach, would not be powerful enough to defend them without the assistance of Britain. Prussia would have been the sentinel on the north of France — not the potential invader of England.

This solution would not have been ideal. Prussia would have been less likely to remain as docile a custodian as a restored Dutch Republic. Pitt, in any case, did not wish to give up Holland to her. There is no evidence, apart from Hardenberg's memoirs, that Harrowby did more than offer "such acquisitions on the side of Holland and the Low

Countries" as would strengthen her influence upon them[1]. The absence of documentary support for Hardenberg's assertion is, of course, not a final proof that his memory had failed him when he wrote his memoirs. But we know that Mulgrave, the acting Foreign Secretary, less than three weeks before the death of Pitt, considered that the Prime Minister was unwilling to buy Prussia's alliance with the territory of Holland. On January 6th, 1806, Mulgrave wrote to Pitt advising him to take this step, and the letter [2] shows that previous conversations on this subject had taken place and that Pitt had so far resisted Mulgrave's suggestion. If Harrowby had offered Holland to Prussia a few months before, there would have been no need to impress Pitt with the urgency of this step. Pitt did not reply to this letter. He died on January 28th without, we may be sure, having allowed the offer to be made.

The Grenville-Fox ministry, which succeeded that of Pitt, lost no time before starting peace negotiations with Napoleon. In the whole course of these negotiations the fact of the annexation of the Southern Netherlands to France, and of the reduction of the Northern Netherlands to the rank of a French client-state was accepted by Britain, and no efforts were made to modify the situation along the North Sea coast opposite to England's low shores in accordance with British traditional policy. The fact that peace between Britain and France did not result from the various pourparlers that took place in 1806 is not very material from our point of view: it is enough to know that Fox, the leader of British foreign policy, was prepared to sacrifice the Netherlands. This sacrifice was, of course, a complete and revolutionary reversal of the traditional policy of his country. To understand how it

[1] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, p. 345, note. In *Pitt and the Great War*, p. 552, note, H. Rose writes: "Every despatch I have read runs counter to this assertion. If Harrowby made the offer, it was in sheer desperation and on his own authority; but he nowhere mentions it". Cf. H. Rose, *The Third Coalition*, pp. 226—9.

[2] Published for the first time in Appendix F to vol. I of *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*

came to be accepted, Fox's frame of mind must be taken into account. He did not see in the French and in their Emperor the enemies of European peace they had been in the eyes of Pitt. Fox considered that the French could be trusted, and that it was only due to lack of sympathetic insight on the part of the British governing classes that the French had been turned into enemies. He started negotiations in the full belief that, when fairly dealt with, the French would keep to their bond and could be made into friends, if not into allies. It may be added that before his death, Fox had shed these illusions.

After the failure of the negotiations of 1806, the war took on again, and more than ever before, the aspect of a fight to a finish, in which considerations about peace terms played a very subordinate part. The main concern of ministers, apart from that of dealing with domestic unrest, was that of fighting the enemy and acquiring allies. After the brief interlude provided by the Whig element in the Ministry of All the Talents, the policy of Pitt remained in the ascendant, unchallenged to the end. The person who was probably most acutely conscious of the real aims which underlay the struggle was Lord Castlereagh, Secretary for War and Colonies in the administration formed by Lord Portland in May, 1807. Castlereagh had taken a subordinate part in framing the famous note from Pitt to Novossiltzoff in January, 1805, and never forgot the precepts it embodied. The decision to make a direct attempt on the mouths of the Scheldt and on the port of Antwerp was mainly due to his influence [1].

In July 1808, Castlereagh had already drawn up a plan of attack on the mouths of the Scheldt. He converted Lord Liverpool, the future Prime Minister, to his views, and in the course of the year 1809 Liverpool submitted a memoir to the Cabinet in which he asserted that the possession of Walcheren and Flushing had at all times been favourite objects of policy with British governments. He appealed to every naval officer "whether the Scheldt is not the only quarter from whence invasion of England can

[1] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, p. 372.

be seriously apprehended, as long as we maintain our superiority at sea" [1].

Castlereagh returned to the charge in March and in May of that year. In the face of considerable opposition inside the Cabinet, he organised the expedition, assisted in this work by the Dutch Colonel de Girard de Milet van Coehoorn [2], who had passed into British service after the fall of Surinam. The expedition sailed on July 28th, under the command of Lord Chatham. It was a disastrous failure, and caused the famous duel between Castlereagh and Canning, and the resignation of both from office.

The landing at Walcheren had been meant in the first place as a diversion, and as such it conformed with the Austrian request made by the Ambassador Starhemberg in April of the same year. But, as Liverpool's memoir shows, it was more than a diversion. If it had succeeded, it would have wrenched from the French the most valuable part of the North Sea coast, and this is the consideration which had determined the choice of the spot on which the diversion was to take place. This proves that in 1809 the traditional policy of Great Britain in the Netherlands had not been forgotten. But until the chances of war turned altogether, no further proof was given that this policy was being remembered.

E. — *The Oranges in Exile*

A description of the relations between Great Britain and the Netherlands during the period of the Revolution and of the Empire would not strike one as fragmentary or incomplete if the vicissitudes of the House of Orange during that period were passed over in silence. On February 7th, 1795, it is true, the deposed Stadholder William V took a step of a public and official nature, when he wrote from Kew to the authorities in the Dutch colonies of the East and West Indies the famous letter, in which

[1] Yonge, *Life of Liverpool*, I, p. 283.
[2] *Ged.* V, p. 804.

he ordered them to admit the troops of England into their territories and to consider the English forces as those of a power which was in relations of friendship and alliance with their High Mightinesses the States General. The legal grounds of this order are debatable, its practical result was slight. At most, as in the case of Ceylon, it weakened the defence of the colonies against the British by introducing doubt and hesitation into the counsels of the defenders.

From the point of view of the House of Orange, the principal result of the letter from Kew was a complete breach with the progressive party, which was now in the ascendant in Holland. The fate of the House of Orange, outwardly at least, seemed entirely separated from that of Holland. There were a few sporadic events in which the names of Orange and Holland met again. But when the war broke out once more, after the truce of Amiens, the divorce appeared more definite than ever.

Yet the miracle took place, and the history of 1813, which led to the re-establishment of an independent Holland where the House of Orange occupied a position of greater eminence than ever before, could not be written without continual reference to the activities of the members of the Orange family. That is why, in this introductory chapter, it is necessary to pass in review the history of the Oranges during their exile.

After a brief sojourn in the Royal palace at Kew, the ex-Stadholder and his family were, before the end of February, 1795, installed at Hampton Court. They had a kind of court, composed of Dutch refugees who remained faithful to the old régime. George III obtained from Parliament the payment of an annual subsidy to the ex-Stadholder in his capacity of ally of England. William V had arrived in England with the feelings and the outlook of an *émigré*. For the remainder of his life, he had only one desire; the re-establishment in Holland of the precise conditions obtaining there prior to his departure in January, 1795, and the restoration of his House to the position which it had lost at the same date. His son, the

Hereditary Prince[1], was a complete contrast to his father. He was ambitious, overflowing with energy, actuated by a perpetual wish to be active and to occupy an executive position. Always full of grand schemes, not only for himself, but for the future of Holland, he was too ambitious at the same time to sacrifice his future career if it had to be made elsewhere than in Holland. In his youth, William VI was easily swayed by outside influences, and it was only in later years that he became the inaccessible, self-willed man, domineering, unable to delegate power, which he proved to be after the establishment of the United Netherlands. Even then, it might be said, he was not free from outside influences. As King William I, he was still haunted by the figure of Napoleon. The conception of a Napoleon, established at the centre of things, *primum mobile* of all that took place in his dominion, fascinated him, although we know better than the Great Emperor's contemporaries how little connection with reality such a conception possessed.

Between these two men stood the wife and mother, Princess Louise, sister of King Frederick William II of Prussia. She had a clear intelligence, an immense energy, and a remarkable capacity for rapid decision, as she had proved during the troubles of 1787, when she forced the hand of Prussia and brought about the foreign intervention which caused the brief restoration of the House of Orange in Holland. She did not share her husband's unimaginative hankering after what had been left behind, but was equally averse from the experimental and impulsive ways of her son. Her cool common sense was always able to see through the flimsiness of her son's latest schemes. She had a gift of historic vision allied to realism, which enabled her to distinguish between steps that were of

[1] In order to distinguish between the three Williams of Orange to whom reference is made in this work, we shall give to each of them his title in the Stadholderly succession. William V is the last Stadholder of Holland: William VI is his son, later King William I of the Netherlands; William VII is the son of William VI. He eventually succeeded his father as King William II of Holland.

lasting value to the House of Orange and those that only offered temporary improvement.

After their arrival in England, the Oranges did not give up all efforts to re-capture by force their lost position in Holland. The younger son of William V, Prince Frederic, was delegated by him to gather all officers and soldiers of the old Dutch army who had emigrated to Germany, and to form them into an army which would threaten the Dutch Republic. Some 600 officers and 1200 privates were thus gathered near Osnabrück and near Bremen. The British Government placed at the disposal of the organisers of this enterprise the proceeds of the sale of Dutch ships that had been seized since Holland joined the war on the side of France. But Prussia, who had made peace with France in 1795, was not disposed, this time, to second any effort for the re-establishment of the House of Orange. The Princess of Orange was not long in discovering this through her correspondence with her brother the King of Prussia [1]. When positively invited to give his assistance, King Frederick William answered with a definite refusal[2]. The Princess of Orange wrote him a further letter, dated September 5th, which she first submitted to the British Government. Great Britain was still prepared to make use of the family relations of the House of Orange in Europe for the successful prosecution of the war. But when these relations proved of no avail, the British lost interest in the *rassemblement*. Moreover, in September 1795, George III, frightened at the risk to which his Electorate of Hanover was exposed, acceded to the peace of Basle, and withdrew all foreign troops, including the English, from his German possessions. All hope of an invasion of Holland had now to be abandoned.

Meanwhile, a new effort to save the position of the House of Orange in Holland was made by another of its members, the Hereditary Prince William VI. If the military effort at Osnabrück, approved by the ex-Stadholder himself, supported by the diplomacy of the Princess, and

[1] *Ged.* II, pp. 826 and 832.
[2] August 3rd, 1795. *Ibid.*, p. 843.

directed by their second son, represented the traditional and orthodox policy of Orange with its dynastic bent towards England, William VI was already prepared to follow a different course. He did not love England. He resented the way he had been left in the lurch by the English when he commanded the Dutch army in 1793. He had reluctantly followed his parents to England in January 1795, and expressed almost at once the wish to go to Prussia. Prussia was, as we have seen, drawing nearer to France, and for this reason the parents disliked his plan. In the end they gave way before his insistence, but not before they had obtained the approval of the British ministers [1]. He left England for Berlin on September 5th.

The correspondence of William VI betrays his growing bitterness against England. He accused the British of having become as anxious as the Prussians themselves that Prussian neutrality should not be violated [2]. He shared the anger of Orangists as well as anti-Orangists in Holland in regard to the British conquest of the Cape and of Ceylon [3]. He asked his parents what difference there was between being dependent on England or on Prussia. Yet dependence on Prussia meant, indirectly at least, dependence on France, and compromise with the enemy of Great Britain. It was in that direction, indeed, that William VI was already moving.

He expressed the wish that his wife and his child (the future King William II of Holland) should leave England and join him in Prussia, which would naturally not lessen the displeasure caused by his own departure. His mother, excellent reader of character that she was, replied that his decision was solely due to petty vindictiveness against England. "This is beneath us", she commented. "When you wish for a breach with England, because she does not act towards your country in the manner which you deem best, it is only in your imagination that you show yourself a great man and a real Dutchman [4]". But William VI had made his choice. He told his mother that

[1] *Ged.* II, p. 850. [2] *Ibid.* p. 893. [3] *Ibid.* p. 896.
[4] Jan. 15th, 1796. *Ged.* II, p. 900.

if the Oranges did not wish to be hated by France, they should themselves not hate France. "We need the French in order to maintain the freedom and independence of the Republic", he wrote [1]. He expected that Prussia would come to a friendly arrangement with France, and obtain a restoration of the House of Orange in Holland and the return of all the colonies. The Princess replied that Prussia was allowing herself to be deceived by the French, and that the Prussians would soon be heartily weary of all his endeavours to enlist their support, while it would not be long before the suspicions of the English were aroused. She realised that, under the terms of the agreement made with her husband, the Dutch colonies which had been conquered by the English need not be returned, because in that agreement only a voluntary cession had been envisaged, and that in consequence Holland had to depend on the goodwill of the English when the colonial question came finally to be settled [2].

William VI was even less successful in his endeavours to bring his father round to his way of thinking. If the Princess was a woman who had a guiding principle — that the interest of the House of Orange must be considered apart from immediate but momentary and uncertain advantages, the ex-Stadholder rigidly adhered to his single formula: nothing if not an unconditional return to the situation before the revolution. He informed his son that he would never accept a restoration which depended on France's goodwill, left the Southern Netherlands in French possession, or imposed upon Holland an equalitarian constitution [3].

Another of William VI's ideas appeared equally unattractive to his father. This idea, which was cherished by other persons as well as by the Hereditary Prince, was that it would be desirable to unite all the Northern and Southern Netherlands into one state. This idea cropped

[1] Feb. 2nd. 1796. *Ged.* II, p. 904.
[2] *Ged.* II, pp. 911, 915.
[3] William VI's statement of his views, Aug. 10th 1796. *Ged.* II, p. 935. The father's reply, *ibid.*, p. 936.

up with a curious persistence throughout the period of French domination [1]. But the ex-Stadholder remained sceptical [2]. Without the possession of the portions of Luxemburg, Hainault, and Artois, which were in the hands of France before the Revolution, the Southern Netherlands were difficult to hold, he considered. A large army would be required, and numerous Catholics would be incorporated in what was now a Protestant state.

Prince William VI came back to his argument in a letter of the following year [3]. An objection to France as a neighbour, he thought, displayed the mentality of an Englishman rather than of a Dutchman. "For us, the first point is the existence of our country. External relations are only a secondary consideration. If good care is exercised, French influence can be utilised for the good of the Republic".

The last sentence showed more clearly than ever the trend of the Prince's inclination. He had given up the hope of Prussia's support when he at last discovered that all the fine words of the Prussian Minister Haugwitz had not prevented a convention between Prussia and France which stipulated that compensation for the House of Orange was to be found in Germany only [4]. This was a definite admission that the Oranges need entertain no further hope of restoration in Holland. Prussia had withdrawn even the most nominal form of support for the Dutch pretensions of her King's Orange relatives.

If the ex-Stadholder refused to return to Holland "as a constitutional king like Louis XVI, exposing himself to the same fate [5]," he also refused to accept compensations in Germany. William V seemed greatly changed since the

[1] Colenbrander, *De Bataafsche Republiek*, p. 162. William VI, when pleading with his mother for the acceptance of this idea (Jan. 28th, 1796, *Ged.* II, p. 892, note), admitted that he had cherished it for the last seven years. It was, indeed, during a journey to Germany in 1789 that he had first become acquainted with it (*Ged.* I, p. XLVI—XLVII).
[2] Sept. 16th 1796. *Ged.* II, p. 936.
[3] May 19th, 1797. *Ged.* II, p. 936.
[4] Aug. 5th 1796. *Ged.* II, p. 943.
[5] *Ged.* II, p. 949.

year 1787, with all its vacillations, and was now displaying a remarkable amount of consistency by strictly adhering to the negative policy he had adopted. He even refused to allow his son to act in his name [1]. His wife supported him in this, and repeated her conviction that England remained the one stable point in a chaotic world.

The attitude of the three principal members of the Orange family appears with sufficient clearness from the exchange of views which has been given. It is therefore not necessary to enter into the detail of all that was said and written in the course of the two years that followed. It will suffice to note a few salient features, in so far as they affected the subsequent relations between Orange and England. The idea of an eventual union of the Northern and Southern Netherlands was brought to the attention of the British ministers through various agents of William VI, such as Baron Maximilien d'Yvoy. In 1799, d'Yvoy met an English colonel, Malcolm, who had been investigating the peasants' risings against the French in Brabant. In his report to Grenville, Malcolm touched upon the chances of the House of Orange among the dissatisfied elements in the Southern Netherlands [2]. The idea of a union between the two parts had been mentioned the year before by England in the course of her negotiations with Russia [3].

The result of the new interest displayed by England was a temporary friendliness towards that country on the part of William VI [4], while even the ex-Stadholder consented to talk of the possibility of a reunion of all the Netherlands [5]. But this talk still consisted mainly of the enumeration of objections. It is about this time that William VI admitted to the Orangist émigré Kinkel, who had taken service in the British Army, that it was perhaps as a result of his father's exclusive dependence on England that he himself had gone too far in his reliance on

[1] July 8th 1797. *Ged.* II, p. 972.
[2] *Ged.* III, p. 431.
[3] *Ged.* III, pp. 890—1.
[4] April 9th 1799. *Ged.* III, p. 920.
[5] June 29th 1799. *Ged.* III, pp. 962 sqq.

Prussia. Kinkel remarked that for a Prince of Orange the choice was not between England and Prussia, but between England and France[1]. Soon enough it became evident that William VI had not yet, as Kinkel put it, made his definite choice between these two evils. For the fiasco of the expedition of 1799 infuriated the Prince, who called the armistice " a shameful arrangement [2]". Kinkel found that the Prince had, once more, become entirely Prussian and French, and spoke with admiration of Bonaparte, "a rebel, just like my ancestor William the Silent [3]".

In 1797, in the course of his correspondence with his father, Prince William VI had expressed the opinion that his father's views were those of an Englishman rather than those of a Dutchman. But his own views had, since that time, become markedly less national, and were now entirely dynastic. Re-establishment of the stadholderate seemed farther away than ever since the fiasco of the Anglo-Russian invasion of Holland in 1799. William VI now turned his eyes towards compensation in the German Empire, and towards financial compensation for the losses suffered by his House in Holland. In the course of the negotiations at Amiens he made colossal claims[4]. But, notwithstanding the rumours that were current during these negotiations, the peace to which England consented brought no positive advantages to the House of Orange. Meanwhile, the ex-Stadholder had also become convinced that England was unable to obtain redress for him in Holland, and on October 21st 1801 he left his place of refuge and went to Germany. There he occupied the Castle of Oranienstein in his own principality of Nassau, where he hoped to end his days as a German princeling. On December 26th he addressed a letter to his supporters in Holland in which he said that, owing to the turn which events had now taken, there was no further need for them to abstain from participating in public affairs. This was

[1] *Ged.* III, p. 914.
[2] *Ged.* III, p. 1088.
[3] Kinkel to Grenville, March 10th 1800 (*Ged.* III, p. 1102).
[4] *Ged.* III, p. 1144.

a tacit acceptance of the new situation in Holland. The fate of the House of Orange seemed henceforth irrevocably sundered from that of the country where it had played such a prominent part during nearly two and a half centuries.

To William VI the step taken by his father appeared a further justification for a more definite attempt to obtain from France what his House had not been able to obtain with the support of England. He urged his father to send a mission to Bonaparte. The ex-Stadholder's pride suffered considerably at the thought of such a step, but he considered that what he could never have done as a Stadholder of the Dutch Republic became permissible to him as a mere German prince who had neither power nor an army. He was afraid that he might lose the remainder of his patrimony, and consented, not only to the mission, but even to the further humiliation of entrusting it to his own son.

In agreement with the Prussian government William VI applied for permission to go to Paris. His father renounced in his favour all compensations he might receive under the treaty which had not yet been signed. Bonaparte agreed to the visit, but made it clear that, while all honours due to the Hereditary Prince as a German sovereign and a relative of the royal houses of Prussia and England were to be rendered to him, he was not to be considered as the Dutch Stadholder[1]. William VI went to Paris with the intention of destroying all prejudices which might still exist there against his House, and of obtaining the retention of its German sovereignties in the hands of the House of Orange. He arrived in Paris in February 1802. The sights of the French capital, where he had never been before, impressed him; so did his visits to various members of Bonaparte's family. The greatest impression, however, was made by the First Conslu

[1] Bonaparte to Talleyrand, Feb. 2nd 1802. *Ged.* IV, p. XIII. Writing about William VI to the King of Prussia at the end of May of the same year, Bonaparte takes great care to call him "le Prince héréditaire de Nassau".

himself. The royal pomp which surrounded Bonaparte, the atmosphere of success, of victory, but most of all the air of active and efficient power which seemed to emanate from him filled the young Prince with admiration. Here he could contemplate his own dream come true: here was a master of men! The impression never entirely faded away. When later the Prince humiliated himself utterly before Napoleon, we must remember how genuine his admiration had been, and how complete his acceptance of Napoleon's ascendancy. Later still, when success has come, we shall see the King of the Netherlands play at being Napoleon. Then again it will be necessary to remember that the Napoleon he apes is not the harassed Emperor surrounded by spies and by enemies even in the bosom of his own family, but the young First Consul, at the real culmination of his career, when he signed a peace with the King of England.

The Prince was well pleased with the First Consul's reception. He was permitted to dine at Bonaparte's table one day, and sat by his side, listening to his conversation, infinitely interested to hear his opinion on matters great and small. "Everything concerning so great a man is equally significant", he wrote to his father [1]. Meanwhile, he was kept waiting from day to day, and was merely being used by the Prussian Minister to play a not very dignified or, for that matter, very helpful part in his intrigues with Talleyrand [2].

In England, a most unfavourable view was taken of the Prince's journey. His mother, who had not yet joined her husband in Germany, did what she could to prevent "this effort to gain the favour of enemies which could never be gained" from causing "the loss of the protection of old friends [3]". Several English ministers gave her to understand that her son's behaviour might spoil all the efforts they were making at Amiens on behalf of the House of

[1] Feb. 8th 1802. *Ged.* IV, p. 681.
[2] Jackson, *Diaries and Letters*, I, pp. 63—64. Also *Ged.* IV pp. 677, 693.
[3] *Ged.* IV, p. 676.

Orange. It was rumoured in England that William VI was manoeuvring in order to be appointed Bonaparte's representative in Holland. It is not known whether the Prince really had such plans, but Schimmelpenninck, who met him in Paris during those days, became fully convinced that he and the whole of his family had completely given up all hopes in regard to Holland [1].

In any case the stipulations of the Treaty, as it was finally signed at the end of the month of March, were very unsatisfactory for the Oranges. England and France agreed that compensation, proportionate to the loss they had suffered in Holland, would be granted to the Princes of Orange. But in the separate treaty between France and the Batavian Republic it was declared that such compensation would not be made at the latter's expense. The compensation turned out to be utterly inadequate: it consisted in the newly created Principality of Fulda, which was mainly composed of expropriated ecclesiastical lands. On May 21st, the day after he had been informed of the nature of the compensation, William VI made a renewed attempt to move the First Consul, wrote a letter full of flattery to the "Pacifier of Europe", and implored him to give him a larger number of subjects [2]. It was without avail.

Assistance that was of more real utility to the House of Orange came after all from the side of England. On July 25th 1803, the British Government obtained from Parliament the sum of £ 60,000 and a pension of £ 16,000 per annum to be paid to the Prince of Orange in consideration of the loss which his house had sustained in the course of the last eight years [3]. The Chancellor of the Exchequer explained in the House of Commons that the value of the ships taken from Holland in the name of the Prince of Orange was £ 150,000 and that, as England refused to restore the ships to Holland, who offered, on

[1] *Ged.* IV, p. 351. Schimmelpenninck was then Ambassador of the Batavian Republic in Paris.
[2] *Ged.* IV, pp. 698, 701.
[3] *Ged.* IV, pp. 717, 736—7.

that condition, to give indemnity to the Prince, "that circumstance certainly gave him a claim, if not upon the justice, at least upon the generosity of the British nation." This arrangement was due mainly to the efforts made on behalf of the Princes of Orange by their old friend Lord Malmesbury, who had been Ambassador in Holland and had become the recognised adviser of the British Government on Dutch affairs [1].

The Princes of Orange enjoyed a few years' rest after the Peace of Amiens. William V, who had been joined by his wife, quietly spent his last years in the castle of Oranienstein near Dietz, while his son exercised his modest sovereignty in Fulda. The ex-Stadholder died on April 9th 1806, and the British Government decided to continue in favour of William VI the payments that had been made to his father. Almost at once new tribulations visited the exiles. In July of the same year the Confederation of the Rhine was established, and the territories of Nassau and Weingarten were incorporated in other territories that entered the Conferation.

William VI, furious at the spoliation, accepted a command in the Prussian Army and distinguished himself in the field until he was made prisoner at Auerstädt and released on parole. Once more he turned to Napoleon, and wrote several letters begging for the return of the territories which had been taken from him. The tone of these letters was extremely undignified. In the first, dated October 28th 1806, he wrote that it depended on Napoleon to earn his eternal gratitude by securing the fate of a House which had a right to inspire the Emperor with interest because of the great men who had made it illustrious in the past. Napoleon answered with a brief and sarcastic note, but William VI continued to press him in long letters wherein he promised to give all necessary guarantees of submissiveness, asked for permission to pay homage to Napoleon in Berlin, and tried to throw the blame upon the King of Prussia and his advisers. The month of February 1807 saw the Prince wondering whether

[1] *Ged.* IV, p. 737.

to recommend the interests of his House to the King of England, in April he was making obeisance to the Emperor Alexander, to whom he said that he would rather obtain a restoration at the hands of the Allies than from Napoleon [1]. But in July Napoleon was the recipient of a humble letter written by the Princess of Orange under the dictation of her husband, William VI. This letter had some effect: an annuity for life of 60,000 guilders (£ 5,000) was granted to the Prince, at the expense of Murat. Thus Prince William of Orange accepted the position of pensioner of both protagonists in the war, although it does not appear that the French annuity was ever really paid. The flow of letters to Napoleon still continued for some time, but without further result.

Prince William VI, however, was beginning to realise that if help could still reach him from anywhere, it could only be from England. He had, in 1806, travelled from Erfurt to Brunswick, thence to Berlin, which he left for Danzig with the Prussian Court. He had followed it to Königsberg, then to Memel. The Peace of Tilsit left him only his territory of Raçothen in Poland. But it was not an easy thing to conciliate the governing circles in England. There William VI was reputed to be half a Jacobin. When, in 1809, a university had to be chosen for William's son, Malmesbury objected to Edinburgh, because it was too radical. But he hastened to add a warning note: this should not be repeated to the Prince of Orange, who perhaps might like Edinburgh all the better on that account [2]. And the Prince's mother, who knew his reputation, took great care that Constant de Rebecque, who accompanied her grandson to England as a tutor, should not be confounded with his half-brother, Benjamin Constant, the famous radical publicist who was then living in exile in London.

It was through his son William, who was now the Hereditary Prince of Orange, that William VI decided to make another attempt to re-establish the connection of his

[1] *Ged.* V, pp. 761, 770, 764—5, 773.
[2] *Ged.* V, p. 781.

House with England. He thought for one moment of going to England himself, but his friends wisely advised him not to do so. William VII, on the other hand, was too young to share his father's unpopularity. He could start a career in England which might perhaps even lead to a new dynastic union and thus continue an old Orange tradition. The time for any mention of such a plan had not yet arrived, and those whose minds it crossed brushed it aside with something akin to consternation. In the end, the plan very nearly succeeded. The projected mariage of Prince William VII with Charlotte, daughter of the Regent, will form the subject of a separate chapter. The existence of the plan as a means of re-establishing friendly relations with England is all that need be mentioned in this place. William VII eventually was sent to Oxford, where he stayed until he joined Wellington's army in Spain in 1811.

Meanwhile, William VI was using every conceivable method to draw the attention of the English upon himself. He had maintained relations with Orangist circles in Holland, and was now trying to act in England as a representative of those circles. He had sent an envoy to England, Van Heerdt, who repeatedly saw Canning and spoke to him of the Prince's plans. William VI made efforts to induce the King of Prussia to join in the war against France, and took good care that the British Government should be informed of his activities. He transmitted information about the military forces present in Holland, and enquired what were England's intentions concerning the form of government to be given to Holland in the case of her liberation (April—May 1809). In June, Van Heerdt reported that the Prince's information was received with interest, and that further news from him was looked forward to with eagerness. Canning and Portland, according to Van Heerdt, declared that the Prince could not employ himself more usefully than he was doing at present, by using his good influence in Austria and Prussia [1].

This was, however, merely a more kindly manner of

[1] *Ged.* V. p. 794, *ibid.* p. 798.

telling the Prince that he was not expected to take any active part in the expedition which was then being prepared against the mouths of the Scheldt. And although on July 8th Van Heerdt was able to inform the Prince in an unofficial manner that Walcheren was the objective of the expedition [1], it was only through the newspapers that the Prince learned that it had started. But as soon as he had received this intelligence, William VI asked Van Heerdt to inform the British Government that he had in no way renounced any of his rights, and maintained unaltered all the claims of his House [2].

The Walcheren expedition as we know proved an utter failure, and the Prince was dragged back to smaller cares. The sum of £ 5,000 which he had spent in the course of his propagandist activities proved exceedingly difficult to recover. Robert Fagel, a Dutch friend of the House of Orange, was sent to England in November 1809 to obtain a settlement of this claim. With his brother Henry and the assistance of Lord Malmesbury, it took him more than six months to persuade the Foreign Office to take any action. Canning's successor, Wellesley, kept them waiting for an answer until August 1810, when the debt was at last settled [3].

When on January 15th 1811 the Prince of Wales became Regent, William VI wrote to him asking for the protection of his government, "which alone is saving my family from total ruin" [4]. A little later he was thinking of entering the Austrian army and thought it advisable to ask for the approval of the British Government [5]. Lord Malmesbury, consulted on this matter, saw no objection to the Prince's making this request to England, and thus confirming the fact that he now considered himself a client of England. But the old statesman had no illusions as to the degree of popularity enjoyed by the Prince of Orange. The communication of the Prince's letters to the

[1] *Ged.*, V, p. 798.
[2] Aug. 10 Ch., 1809, *ibid* pp. 808—9.
[3] *Ibid* p. 823.
[4] *Ged.* VI p. 1808.
[5] *Ged.* VI, p. 1811.

Regent, the Duke of York, and Lord Wellesley, wrote Malmesbury, "will probably not greatly influence the conduct of the persons to whom they are addressed[1]...."

About the middle of the year, the Hereditary Prince (William VII) was appointed an aide-de-camp to Wellington in Spain. This appointment marked the beginning of a turn for the better in the relations between England and the House of Orange. For the young Prince became a popular and efficient officer, distinguished himself in the field, and soon acquired the goodwill of the leaders of British policy.

In March 1812, Prince William VI was again contemplating a journey to England, whither he wished to conduct his second son, Prince Frederic, and where he proposed to stay for a few months. He consulted his friends before taking a decision [2]. Malmesbury was again at once ready with advice. He gave four major and sundry minor reasons against the Prince's visit. The principal reason, however, he preferred not to express. It was, of course, that Prince William VI would have been unwelcome in England [3].

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[1] April 26th, 1811. *ibid* p. 1814.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 1828—9.
[3] Malmesbury to H. Fagel. *Ged.* VI, p. 1834.

CHAPTER I

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE LIBERATION OF HOLLAND IN 1813

A. The Dutch Problem during the First Months of 1813
B. First Personal Negotiations between William VI and the British Government
C. Negotiations between the Continental Allies about Holland before the Accession of Austria — William VI and William VII
D. Castlereagh's Despatch on War Aims (Sept. 18th) — Plans of William VI
E. Castlereagh's Memorandum on Holland (Nov. 5th)
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G. Holland in 1813 — The Popular Anti-French Movement — It Expects the Arrival of William VII — This is a Result of British Propaganda
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A. — *The Dutch Problem during the First Months of 1813*

In the middle of 1812, the chance that Britain might ever succeed in establishing in the Netherlands a state of affairs which answered to her traditional policy appeared very small indeed. The dominant military power of the European Continent was solidly established along the whole coast opposite the Eastern shore of England, and there was little likelihood that it could be dislodged by direct action. Yet, in more than one respect, the situation had undergone a favourable modification. The Dutch nation, powerless but profoundly dissatisfied, had at last found, under the conqueror's exactions, that unanimity whose absence had so greatly facilitated the conquest in 1795. Although the head of the House of Orange was still *persona non grata* in British governing circles, his son

had, by the excellent impression made during his stay in England, and by his distinguished service in the Peninsula under Wellington, gained the sympathies of the whole nation. From his person, this sympathy must in the course of time redound upon his house, and a return of England to the old policy of using the House of Orange in order to exercise her influence in the Northern Netherlands no longer appeared inconceivable. More than ever, England was concentrating her efforts upon the general solution of the European crisis. She tried to extend and to strengthen the alliance against Napoleon, while she played at the same time, to the best of her ability, and with growing success, her own part in the Spanish Peninsula. She made it clear that her subsidies were at the disposal of any Power which wished to join in the struggle against Napoleon. But the making of detailed plans for the re-organisation of Europe, even in regard to so important an aspect as the future of the Netherlands, still seemed premature.

At the same time, there was a new expectancy in the air. When Napoleon engaged upon his foolhardy Russian enterprise, and long before its catastrophic issue could be foreseen, English statesmen were taking into consideration the eventuality of his being immobilised in the East for a longer period than he had expected. They examined the chances of success of various subsidiary expeditions which might be attempted in that case. The Secretary for War, Lord Bathurst, considered [1] that a descent upon the coast of Holland might have certain particular advantages, due to the proximity of the objective and the greater practicability of a retreat in case of disaster. The young Prince William VII might be very useful in such an expedition owing to his good name in England and to the devotion of the Dutch people to the House of Orange. The distinction made by Bathurst is interesting enough. The Dutch might call or wish for the return of the House of Orange in general, but the actual choice of person would lie with England, and her choice would not

[1] Bathurst to Wellington, Oct. 12th, 1812. (*Ged.* VI, p. 1848).

be in favour of the head of the family. William VII "is thought likely, or worthy at least, to recover the fallen fortunes of his family", wrote Bathurst. Willam VI's inspired idea of sending his son to England was beginning to bear fruit, even if, at this stage, he himself was not thought worthy of plucking it, should it happen to reach maturity. His belated and somewhat reluctant decision to link his fate, unreservedly, to that of England was also beginning to justify itself. "The re-establishment of the independence of Holland", continued Bathurst, "must be considered as very essentially implicated with our national security".

Soon after Bathurst wrote, the retreat from Moscow began. Napoleon had overreached himself; the Grand Army was melting away. The news was slow in percolating to Western Europe. Still, the British ministers felt that events were moving. The fact that the rout of Napoleon's armies was complete was realised in England only in the middle of December. In the name of his colleagues Bathurst asked Wellington to send the young Prince of Orange to England under some pretext or other, in order that he might be at hand "if the times should prove eventful" [1]. But Bathurst left the final decision with Wellington. "Our opinions", he added, "are not so formed as to induce you to attend to this suggestion".

The year 1813, which thus started while the British ministers had not yet formed their opinions about the way in which the all-important problem of the Netherlands was to be solved, was indeed from every point of view a year of groping in the policy of England. While the Russians, and later also the Prussians, were marching westward, England played only a subordinate part [2]. Her main task was to knit the Powers together and to keep them together. She had, therefore, to regard the susceptibilities of each one of them, and it is natural that she did not wish to rush into the formulation of a cut and dried plan for the future status of the Netherlands. On the other

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 1850.
[2] *Camb. Hist. Brit. For. Policy* I, p. 392 sqq.

hand, any increase in the size of the Alliance was welcome. As it began to seem less unlikely that the Dutch might take an active part in the fight, growing attention was given to their country. Even so, much time passed before the complete independence of the Northern Netherlands in their integrity became accepted as an axiom of British Policy. Provided the main principle — that the whole of the Netherlands should not be in the hands of the dominant military Power of the Continent — could be safeguarded, no settlement which could be generally acceptable to the Allies was vetoed *a priori* by the British Government [1].

The first months of the year did not bring about any of the sensational events which many had expected to result from the Russian campaign. Napoleon had returned to Paris on December 18th, 1812. He had ample means for continuing the war. A month later, his armies were still to all intents and purposes holding the line of the Vistula. There was no chance of a revolution in the Netherlands, and Wellington's decision to keep the young Prince of Orange with him was welcomed by the British Government. "There is nothing passing at home which would make his presence here desirable", wrote Bathurst to Wellington on Feb. 17th, 1813 [2].

Prince William VI was in the meantime renewing his efforts to play an active part in the events of the day. He was in Berlin, and had, already at the end of December, tried to obtain permission from the King of Prussia to make a journey to Austria, where he wished to take a command in the army which, he hoped, would soon participate in the fight against the French. The Prussian Chancellor Hardenberg asked him to stay in Berlin, because the move which the Prince contemplated would have been embarrassing to the King of Prussia as well as to the Emperor of Austria, both of whom were still in

[1] In January 1813 Lord Walpole, in conversation with Metternich, stated as his private opinion that the Hanseatic towns and Holland "would form objects of interest to Great Britain". (*F. O. Russia*, 84).

[2] *Ged.* VI, p. 1857.

alliance with Napoleon. The Prince therefore once more addressed himself to England, and wrote to Castlereagh asking for subsidies in order to raise a corps of Dutch and Nassovian men who might, under his command, take part in the war of liberation [1]. Malmesbury, who was shown a copy of this letter, wrote to Henry Fagel, the unofficial representative of the Prince, that, at the present time, even if a visit of the Prince William VI would not be attended "with all the murmurance" it would have occasioned the previous year, "still it would be liable to many grave objections and above all be attended with no possible advantage". Malmesbury considered that the Prince would do better to turn his whole thoughts to Austria and to "endeavour through that Court to recover his German territories" [2]. Did Malmesbury think that the House of Orange had no chance in Holland? Or was his view perhaps that such chances as existed were the young Prince's rather than his father's?

The existence of the Dutch problem was recalled to Castlereagh and his colleagues from another side about the same period. In March, a Rotterdam merchant, C. P. Gevers, went to England with the self-imposed mission of enlisting the assistance of England for an eventual revolution in Holland [3]. He arrived in London about March 13th, and was received by Castlereagh. He spent two months in England, after which he returned to the Continent, having been asked, in all probability, to report on the military strength of the French. As an intermediary between Holland and England, he played only a subsidiary part. The one real link between the two countries, at least until the month of November, 1813, was provided by the members of the House of Orange.

[1] Feb. 20, 1813. (*Ged.* VI, p. 1857).

[2] March 13, 1813. (*Ged.* VI, p. 1860).

[3] In later years Gevers wrote an account of his activities in which he greatly over-rated the part he played, and claimed to have been the real cause of the renewed interest taken by England in Dutch affairs. The part played by Gevers has since been reduced to its right proportions. (*Ged.* VI, p. 1862 sqq. Cf. also Colenbrander *Inlijving en Opstand*, p. 262).

The activities of the House of Orange were about to enter upon a new phase. In the course of February 1813, the Russians had gradually pushed the French line of defence back to the Oder. Prussia considered the moment for action had arrived, and on the 28th signed a treaty of alliance with Russia at Kalish. On March 16th, she finally declared war against France, but before this the French had already fallen back on the line of the River Elbe. These events spurred both the Oranges and the English ministers to renewed activity. William VI and his mother talked of the future with a hopefulness and a precision of detail which they had avoided up to that time. "If the Dutch nation spontaneously calls you to the throne", wrote the Princess Mother, "I daresay you will not refuse, provided this agrees with the plan of the principal Powers. But," she added, knowing the readiness with which her son had eaten humble pie in the past, "I should never advise you to appear in the light of one who begs for a crown" [1]. The Prince replied that it was too early for definite plans, but that his inclination was to preserve the ancient form of Dutch Government, with reform only where an end had to be made to ancient abuses [2]. Meanwhile, he offered his services and those of his second son to Prussia.

If Prussia's official choice in favour of the Alliance against Napoleon also produced a greater display of activity among the leaders of English diplomacy, they were not yet prepared, in this month of April, to envisage further developments with the detailed precision which appealed to the Oranges. Their leading thought was still the reconstruction of the Alliance. "The political arrangement of Europe in a larger sense", wrote Castlereagh to Cathcart, the British Ambassador who had followed the Emperor Alexander to his headquarters, "is more difficult to decide on. So much depends on events, that it is perhaps better not to be too prompt in encountering litigated questions" [3]. And a fortnight later, he returned to

[1] March 5 (*Ged.* VI, p. 1859). [2] *Ibid.* p. 1859—60.
[3] April 8, 1813 (Webster, *Br. Dipl.* 1813—15, p. 1).

this idea in another letter, where he said, "At present, controversy ought to be discountenanced" [1]. The great object had been to "embark Prussia in the War", the next aim was to make her a really active belligerent, and the further aim to induce Austria to join the Alliance. In a characteristically English way, Castlereagh endeavoured to keep first things first, and to eschew theory at a time when action was the prime requisite.

Speculation, however, could not be entirely suppressed. At any moment England might be compelled to take up a position in regard to some points which her allies were not inclined to keep in abeyance. That is why, already with his despatch of April 8th, Castlereagh sent to Cathcart a copy of Pitt's momentous memorandum on the aims of the war, dated January 19th, 1805 [2], "as an outline to reason from". With the saving clause that action must keep precedence over speculation, it may be said that Castlereagh was returning to the traditional policy of England. He recalled in his letter to Cathcart the conversations he had had with Pitt before the document of 1805 had been drawn up. As regards the Netherlands, they were not to remain undivided in the hands of the dominant continental power. Holland must be free, with an increase of territory, and Prussia was to take the first position in the defence of the barrier to the north of France. As in 1804—5, Prussia was again to be specially catered for: she was indispensable once more for the successful prosecution of the war.

The moves of the Foreign Office in April 1813 do not display a striking unity of purpose. Although controversy was to be discountenanced, Britain contained within herself the seed of controversy. Her sovereign was Elector of Hanover, and the Regent was not disposed to sacrifice his position as a continental ruler. His foreign minister, therefore, was obliged to deviate from strict adherence to his own precept almost on the day he formulated it. On April 9th he recommended the interests of Hanover to

[1] April 20th (Webster, *Br. Dipl.* 1813—15, p. 1).
[2] See above, p. 31, sqq.

Cathcart, and asked him to support the acquisition of a few enclaves by the Electorate [1]. This was very much running ahead of events, and the worst of it was that the acquisition would have to be made at the expense of Prussia. Here was a further reason for satisfying Prussia in other respects. The duality of the position of the House of Hanover was more than once in the course of the following years going to create complications in the policy of England, and, in particular, to affect her attitude towards the Netherlands.

However cautious the Foreign Office may have been in its wish to postpone the discussion of details, the subject of Holland was in any case generally considered by the Continental Allies to be one in which Great Britain was directly and very particularly interested. They showed this when William VI, who, notwithstanding the growing chance of restoration in Holland, was not losing sight of his German interests, asked the courts of Prussia and of Russia in March and April to support his claim to be recognised as the head of the House of Nassau in Germany. Hardenberg and the King of Prussia advised him to go to England where, they considered, his principal aspirations, those concerning Holland, would receive the most effective support. It is possible that the Emperor of Russia gave him similar advice. In any case, he strongly approved of the journey [2]. On April 9th, therefore, William VI wrote to the Regent and to Castlereagh announcing his impending visit. He started on his journey via Stockholm and met Bernadotte, with whom he agreed that, on his return from England, he would take service in the Swedish army. Bernadotte apparently gave his warmest approval to the Prince's undertaking. The continental rulers who at that moment formed the coalition were therefore in favour of an Orange restoration in Holland, and for them the question which Prince of Orange was to benefit by the restoration did not even arise. They expected, obviously, that when the time arrived, William

[1] Webster, *Br. Dipl.* p. 2.
[2] *Ged.* VI, p. 1896—72, 1874—5.

VI, head of the House of Orange, would occupy, in some form or other, the position of his ancestors in the restored Dutch Republic.

William VI embarked from Stockholm for England on April 18th or 19th, and about the same time the news of his impending visit was received in England. There it was naturally most unwelcome, both because his arrival would lead to the discussion of points which the government preferred still to leave undecided, and because it would present a real obstacle to those who wished to put forward his son in the case of a restoration in Holland. "The disposition in Holland is certainly very good", wrote Bathurst to Wellington [1], "but I do not believe the Prince (William VI) to be the most likely man to make the most of it. His son, who is with you, is much more popular in Holland, and if any stir should be made, he would be the best person to go there instead of his father". For that reason, Bathurst wished to have the young Prince near at hand. But as the military situation on the Continent was very uncertain, Bathurst asked that he should not be sent with the avowed purpose of being used in Holland. If he were sent merely to carry despatches, he could easily return to Spain if there appeared to be no chance of utilising him in England soon.

The old Lord Malmesbury, whose failing health had compelled him to retire from public business three years since, and who was now living in the country, had been asked by William VI to give the assistance he always so readily placed at the disposal of Holland and of Orange. He was unable to take any active steps in favour of the Prince, but he did not spare his advice and expressed his opinion very candidly in a letter to the ex-Greffier Henry Fagel. Malmesbury regretted the decision of William VI. He realised that it was now too late to prevent his visit to England, and thought that the sooner the Prince returned to the Continent the better it would be. For if fighting were resumed, William VI's place would be with the army.

Prince William VI was under no illusion as to his

[1] April 20th, 1813 (*Ged.* VI, p. 1872—3).

welcome. But he had no choice left in the matter. Apart from the opinion of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, and from the necessity of obtaining English support for a *coup* in Holland, and of ascertaining the views of the English government about the future of the Netherlands, he realised that his own position required to be made clear in the country which, by common consent, was most directly interested in the fate of the Netherlands. He was naturally not prepared to discuss with the English ministers the question of his rights and those of his son. He acted all along upon the assumption that there existed no doubt about this matter.

B. — *First Personal Negotiations between William VI and the British Government*

William VI arrived in London on April 25th. The same day he applied for an interview with Castlereagh. He naturally thought first of all of the Foreign Secretary as the most likely person to approach, and he intended in the next instance to put his case before the Prince Regent. Lord Malmesbury, whose advice was readily received and even taken, was sure that Castlereagh's reception would be all that it should be, and trusted that he was well intentioned. He pointed to the necessity of cultivating Liverpool who, in his capacity of Prime Minister, was not to be passed over. It also was Malmesbury's opinion that the most should be made of the fact that the Prince of Orange had undertaken his journey with the consent and even by the advice of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, "in order to make it *quite clear* that he comes with no underhand views[1]". The old friend of the Oranges realised that the English ministers would be anxious to avoid any promise or entanglement which might occasion displeasure to any of their continental allies. He may also have thought that the support of the "Northern Potentates" would prove a strong asset to the father in

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 1873—4, 1876.

countering the definite preference which many people in England felt for the son.

Two days after his arrival in London, William VI was received by Castlereagh. The Prince made a very able statement of his views and of his claims[1], maintaining all the while a studied moderation which contrasts with the stiffer tone he adopted after his restoration. But at this moment he had not yet tasted power; he was an experienced petitioner, and was still prepared to follow other people's advice. He took good care to open the conversation by pointing to the approval given by the Russian and Prussian monarchs to the step he was taking. He then proceeded to show in what manner he might make himself directly useful to the cause of the Allies. He had agreed with the Prince Royal of Sweden that on his return from England he would take service with the Swedish army corps which was now assembling in the north of Germany. He would serve at the head of a body of Dutch troops, for which end he now had to request subsidies as well as arms and uniforms. In a very adroit manner, William VI introduced the question of the future of Holland as a subsidiary part of his military plan. While deprecating detailed discussion of future arrangements, he pointed out that the event might arise when, on approaching the Dutch frontier, he would be able to cause a popular rising in Holland. This would, of course, greatly assist in driving the French out of that country. To stir up the Dutch he would have to issue a proclamation, starting with a solemn assurance on his part that past quarrels were entirely forgotten, and with an invitation to national unity. But how, the Prince asked Castlereagh, would he then have to go on, when passing to the unavoidable topic of the future status of his compatriots? The English government, he trusted, would see the necessity of precise information, if the matter could be dealt with at all. Would it be desirable to announce that the old Stadholderly régime was to be restored? Or was it advisable to announce some other system of government "which would

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 1874–5 and 1876–8.

conciliate the wishes of the Dutch nation with the views of the Powers?" The Prince remained studiously vague: "Do not appear to be begging for a crown", had been his mother's advice.

Up to what point would Holland be given a stronger barrier against France? Could the old Dutch frontier be extended, or could some portion of adjacent territory be joined to Holland, in order to make it a stronger bulwark for the defence of European freedom and tranquillity? This was the Prince's second query, carefully undefined and elastic, and it enabled him to remark in passing that in the case of such an extension the constitution of the new state might have to be different from the old constitution of Holland. Another careful hint at the desired crown, but in a form which corresponded with the Prince's deepest convictions. In his view the acquisition of part at least of the Southern Netherlands and the bestowal of sovereignty upon himself were two matters that could not be envisaged separately.

The third item which, the Prince submitted, would be required in the proclamation to the Dutch nation was a mention of the colonies. The Prince knew that he was here treading on delicate ground. The form given to his question is well worth noting: "To what point did Great Britain consider that it suited her own interests to relinquish (de se dessaisir) in favour of this regenerated state the Dutch colonies which she had conquered during the war?" The Prince was most careful not to base his appeal on abstract justice. He admitted the principle of expediency and left the door open for a compromise.

Castlereagh declared that he could not give an immediate reply to the questions raised by the Prince, but he undertook to inform his colleagues, and asked for a official minute of this conversation. This record, written by Henry Fagel and signed by the Prince, was duly delivered at the Foreign Office. The friends of Orange in England were favourably impressed with this first conversation and Malmesbury now declared himself quite converted "as to the propriety of the Prince's visit to this

country". We do not know what precisely Castlereagh had said during the interview, but it appears that he expressed sentiments and doctrines which Malmesbury considered worthy of unreserved approval [1].

William VI, however, was still far from having obtained even the first of his objectives, which was the definite relinquishment of the idea of passing him over in favour of his son in case of a restoration in Holland. On the day of his visit to Castlereagh, his friend Henry Fagel visited Bathurst, the principal protagonist of William VII. Fagel ostensibly came to ask Bathurst's advice about the return of the young Prince from Spain. Bathurst informed him rather incompletely of what had passed between Wellington and himself on that subject, and "gave him to understand that the son was the person to push forward". The following day Bathurst wrote to Wellington, in order to prevent Wellington from giving a version of the situation which might clash with his own. The procedure strikes one as not particularly handsome, but it is clear that Bathurst's aversion for William VI was deep seated. He was unable to realise that in a time of restoration the past must not be called too strictly to account. His outlook in that respect was much more insular than that of Castlereagh, who had an instinctive grasp of continental realities. But Bathurst's views were shared by other members of the government with whom he had been discussing the matter. He had come to the conclusion that it was advisable for Wellington to send the young Prince over to England. "He will be thinking of Germany, and nothing else, in Spain, and, what is of more importance, his father will be thinking of Holland until he will be inclined to act there instead of his son, who *is* popular there, while the father is, I am afraid, rather the reverse", wrote Bathurst [2].

Bathurst also told Wellington that the father's arrival had embarrassed the Government by making it necessary to engage in declarations respecting Holland before the

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 1875, 1879—1880.
[2] *Ged.* VI, p. 1878—9.

time had arrived for doing anything. He added a piece of information which he repeated perhaps not without a little touch of satisfaction. Prince Dolgoroucky, a Russian envoy at the Court of Copenhagen, was understood to have made a proposition to the Danes for the dismemberment of Holland. Bathurst did not believe that the proposition was made with the authority of the Emperor of Russia; Cathcart, the Ambassador at the Russian Court, in any case appeared to have no knowledge of it. But did the existence of such a rumour not prove that, after all, William VI was not so much a protégé of the Tzar as he pretended? Bathurst did not actually express this view in his letter, but one can see the way in which his mind was working.

The facts about the proposition of Dolgoroucky to the Danes are of such a nature [1] that one cannot, indeed, believe Bathurst to have been completely sincere when he dragged them into his letter to Wellington as an argument against the stay of William VI in England. It was a fact that the Russian Emperor had recently sent Prince Dolgoroucky to Denmark to represent that neutrality on her part would not suffice, but that the Allies wanted her to break with France and to give active co-operation in the war. Dolgoroucky seems to have gone beyond his instructions and to have implied that Sweden was giving up her claim to Norway, while he even held out to the Danes the possibility of their being offered Holland and the Hansa Towns by Russia. As it happens, the Danes did not even take into consideration the offer of Holland, but they entered with enthusiasm into the proposal that they should occupy the Hansa Towns — an act to which they were bound by their treaty obligations with France, which stipulated for a Danish occupation in case the French armies had to evacuate the Hansa Towns. They might, thereby, have made themselves agreeable to both belligerents at the same time.

The story of Dolgoroucky's mission was known in England, The value of his proposal was quite accurately

[1] *F. O. Russia* 83.

gauged by the English government, and the Russian Ambassador in London, Count Lieven, had informed Castlereagh that Dolgoroucky had acted in an unauthorised manner. This view was accepted by Castlereagh, and was entirely confirmed when eventually Cathcart wrote to him that Dolgoroucky had been recalled and forbidden to appear at the Emperor's quarters [1]. At the time of the arrival of the Prince of Orange in London, it was not the possibility of Russia's having made these offers to Denmark which troubled the minds of the English ministers. It was the impression they might make upon public opinion in Europe which was feared. If Castlereagh asked for a public disavowal by Russia, it was because of the effect which Dolgoroucky's *démarche* might have in Hamburg and Lubeck, and because "it might discourage the inhabitants of Holland from making any effort for their own liberation."

The only practical effect which the Dolgoroucky episode might conceivably have was that, for the sake of public opinion in Holland, an earlier statement of policy concerning that country might become necessary than had appeared desirable in England. But one fails to see how the presence of William VI could render such a statement more difficult, unless indeed it had been decided that he was to be definitely passed over in favour of his son. However this may have been, Wellington proved to be less influenced by the general dislike of William VI than Bathurst had hoped. When he received Bathurst's letter he decided to keep the young Prince with him, at least until a subsequent mail should have confirmed the request to send him over [2].

[1] Cathcart to Castlereagh, April 27 and May 31, *F. O. Russia* 85.

[2] "He is very young", was Wellington's answer, "and can have no experience in business, particularly in the business of revolutions; he is very shy and diffident, and I do not know that it will not be a disadvantage to him to place him in a situation in which he is to be at the head of great concerns of this description, and that too much is not to be expected from him". Wellington ended with a frank expression of his own opinion: the father was looked to as the head of the insurrection in Holland. He was the person who would have to wait in London,

The visit of William VI meanwhile was at least having one result. The military authorities in England began preparations for action in case of a successful advance of Bernadotte's armies [1]. They started collecting arms which could be sent to the populations of the parts that might be liberated, if there was a disposition to make use of them. Troops were also being collected for demonstrations against the Dutch coast and for the purpose of covering the landing of arms. But the raw recruits who composed these troops would have been unfit for a continental campaign. Apart from the Peninsula, England had no inclination to attempt direct military intervention.

While the European situation was still full of uncertainty, and fighting raged with renewed vigour since Napoleon's counter-attack had started from Mainz during the last week of April, the English ministers had found ample leisure to reach a provisional decision about the manner of dealing with William VI of Orange. On May 18th Castlereagh at last invited the Prince to receive an answer to his overtures of April 27th [2]. He told the Prince that the British Government must always feel a lively interest in the House of Orange, but he declared also that he was unable to give an official answer to the Prince's overtures because the matter was of such importance that it could not be decided without consulting the continental Allies. Meanwhile he gave the assurance that the liberation of Holland, her complete separation from France and the restoration of the House of Orange would always be considered by England as objects of the first importance,

till there should be some appearance of such an insurrection. (Wellington to Bathurst, May 18, 1813. *Ged.* VI, p. 1882).

[1] Bathurst to Wellington, May 5. *Ged.* VI, p. 1880. This disposes of the claim of Gevers that it was at his instance, in June 1813, that the British authorities started preparations for the despatch of arms to Holland.

[2] We have no official report of the conversation which took place, but two days afterwards Castlereagh wrote a summary of the conversation to Lord Cathcart (see below, Appendix A). The next day the Prince of Orange reported what had taken place in a letter to his mother (*Ged.* VI, p. 1881—4), and some time afterwards Henry Fagel put on paper what he remembered of Castlereagh's words (*ibid.*).

both because of the necessity of building a dam against French expansion and because of the ancient relations between England and Orange.

Concerning the personal plans of the Prince for the immediate future, Castlereagh declared it to be desirable that he should remain in England for the time being. England was at present not prepared to assist him in the levying of troops in Germany [1]. Castlereagh also entered into the three questions concerning the future of Holland which had been raised by the Prince. The constitution of Holland might require modification in view of its obvious imperfections. Castlereagh agreed that the ancient form of Stadholderly government was certainly too feeble for a state so exposed to French arms as Holland. Any modification which would be in the direction of strength and solidity would appear to be desirable, especially if it met with the approval of the nation. This was certainly not self-determination, for the approval of the nation was not deemed indispensable. But Castlereagh had obviously profited by the lesson which Napoleon was being taught in Spain and in Germany. The extension of territory received a cautious approval in principle. England would be prepared, at the opportune moment, to co-operate in giving to Holland everything that might make her more independent of France and better able to resist her. These two matters, the frontier and the constitution, could, however, only be solved when the situation had become clearer; future contingencies were bound to exercise a considerable influence upon the arrangements that would eventually have to be made.

Although no more ready to give definite undertakings in regard to the Dutch colonies, Castlereagh returned an answer on this point which was of the highest importance, because he definitely formulated the principle by which England would be guided in their restitution. *All* the

[1] The Regent, as Elector of Hanover, was levying a corps which was to serve under Bernadotte. The plan of the Prince of Orange would no doubt have clashed with this scheme. Castlereagh to Cathcart, April 1813. (*F. O. Russia* 83).

colonies could not be restored. What proportion of the total would eventually return to Holland would depend upon the means of resistance against France which would be at the disposal of Holland after her liberation, and of the degree of cordiality displayed towards England at that future time. The implication of this declaration was nothing less than this: if Holland was prepared to become England's ally against France in a reconstructed Europe, and was able to defend herself adequately, she could count on the restoration of a large part of her colonies. But, in the eyes of England, the measure of this capacity of defence was the strength of the southern frontier. The degree of colonial restitution must therefore depend on the amount, or at least on the strategic value, of the acquisitions made in the Southern Netherlands when the new frontier was fixed.

Castlereagh took immediate measures to obtain the views of England's allies upon the future of Holland. On May 20th, two days after the conversation with William VI, he sent to Lord Cathcart a copy of Fagel's memorandum of the overture made by the Prince of Orange, and a summary of his own reply [1], instructing Cathcart to ask the Russian Emperor's sentiments upon the subject. He also directed Cathcart to communicate with Sir Charles Stewart, the Ambassador to the Prussian Court, who was to open the subject with the King of Prussia. The communication to Prussia was, however, made subject to the approval of the Russian Emperor. It is interesting to note that Castlereagh made no mention of his remark about the return of the Dutch colonies. He evidently considered this to be a subject which had, as much as possible, to be kept free from outside interference.

The reasons which moved the British Government to keep William VI in London were of a varied nature. There was certainly an element of justified distrust towards the Crown Prince of Sweden, who was then already playing his lone hand. To support the Prince of Orange in his plan for raising an Orange legion that would serve under

[1] Mentioned above, p. 72 and note 2.

Bernadotte and invade Holland from the East might have given the Swedish Crown Prince more influence in the decision of the future of that country than England might well desire [1]. At the same time, the issue between William VI and William VII was kept in abeyance by prolonging the father's stay in England. Once he were allowed to proceed to the Continent with the blessing of the British government, his position as future head of the Dutch would have been recognised. William VI appeared to be satisfied with the results he had so far obtained [2]. But his success was even more considerable than he realised. If, in the choice between himself and his son, the British government as a body was still uncertain, and Bathurst was distinctly hostile to him, the leader of British foreign policy, Castlereagh himself, had definitely passed over to his side [3].

C. — *Negotiations with the Continental Allies about Holland before the Accession of Austria — William VI and William VII*

The course of military and political events on the Continent was not very satisfactory at this period. In May, Napoleon won the battles of Lützen and Bautzen, and Davout reconquered Hamburg. The result was the armistice concluded at Pläswitz on June 4th. Before this event, the British Government had already realised that the time for acting in Holland was still very distant, and on May 29th Bathurst had written to Wellington that if William VII had not yet left there was at present no

[1] Malmesbury voiced this feeling when, having read the note of the Prince of Orange to Castlereagh, he wrote to Henry Fagel: "There is too much Bernadotte in it" (*Ged.* VI, p. 1880).

[2] William VI to his mother (*Ged.* VI, p. 1883): "Je ne peux que me louer de la manière dont Lord Castlereagh s'est expliqué sur les intentions du gouvernement".

[3] Castlereagh wrote to Cathcart (see Appendix A): "When I hear from your Lordship that the allied armies are sufficiently advanced to favour an insurrection in Holland, I shall take such measures, in concert with the Prince of Orange, as may facilitate His Serene Highness's views".

reason for sending him to England [1]. The cause of Holland had made little progress among the allies on the Continent. On May 16th during the negotiations between Russia and Austria, the Russians placed the freedom of Holland among the peace terms on which they insisted. But this stipulation was not included in the Secret Treaty of Reichenbach en June 27th [2], by which Austria undertook to enter the war on the side of Russia and Prussia if Napoleon rejected her mediation [3]. Nor had anything been done for Holland in the treaties which had been signed, also at Reichenbach, on June 14th, in which the question of subsidies was settled between England, Russia, and Prussia [4].

The negotiations which led to the Armistice of Pläswitz, to the Austrian pronouncement in favour of armed mediation, and to the opening of the Peace Congress of Prague took place behind the backs of the English representatives. Castlereagh's cautious attitude during this period is not surprising. How could England press for the inclusion in the Allied programme of peace terms that agreed with her particular interests, when she was haunted by the fear that the Allies might take some irrevocable step towards peace without her knowledge? Castlereagh's main preoccupation in June 1813 remained, as it had been during the previous months of the year, to forge the alliance into a really efficient instrument by which to ensure a peace that would be more than provisional.

By the end of June, nevertheless, the situation appeared to have moved sufficiently to warrant a new effort on the part of British diplomacy. However much out of date

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 1884.

[2] Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 6, note.

[3] Bussemaker in Coolemans Beynen, *Gedenkboek*, 1813, I, p. 55, asserts that by the end of June Russia, Prussia, and Austria had already agreed that Holland must be separated from France. This assertion does not appear to be justified.

[4] "I know not the excuse Russia will urge for abandoning Spain and Holland in her view of a Preliminary Peace, but there are parts of present transactions that are not satisfactory", wrote Stewart to Castlereagh on June 16th. (Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 68).

the treaties of Reichenbach with Russia and Prussia might have become since the armistice of Pläswitz, they marked an advance in the history of the alliance. On the other hand, Metternich's crafty diplomacy was placing Austria in the position of European umpire, and Castlereagh feared that the course of events might altogether escape his control. Finally, public opinion in England might be misled by Napoleon's assertion of his willingness to negotiate. At this juncture the news of the Battle of Vittoria (June 21st, 1813) arrived as a most appropriate restorative for English prestige.

The British Government felt that this success put them on strong ground and allowed them to show a disposition to treat for peace in an honourable way. "The risk of treating with France is great", wrote Castlereagh, "but the risk of losing our Continental allies and the confidence of our own nation is greater". This view is expressed in a letter he wrote to Cathcart, who during the armistice days was the most important of England's diplomatic agents abroad. The letter, dated July 6th, was a commentary on a despatch written the previous day, in which, for the benefit of Metternich, England's views about the terms of Peace were set forth. The two documents should be read together [1]. Having indicated the four conditions whose settlement was considered by England as indispensable in any peace in which she would concur, because she had treaty obligations under those heads (they concerned Spain, Portugal, Sicily, and Sweden), Castlereagh mentioned several points upon which England felt it necessary to insist and to "contend for as much as the Allies can be brought to stand to with firmness and spirit". Among the points belonging to this second category was the liberation of Holland from the French Empire, and its recognition and re-establishment as an independent Power.

The fact that, in these instructions, the liberation of Holland was not given as one of the conditions *sine quibus non* might be interpreted as a proof that England was

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 6—13.

prepared to agree to a peace which would leave Holland in the hands of France, thus resigning herself to a definite defeat of her traditional policy in the Netherlands. It is not necessary, however, to draw such a conclusion. On the Continent, at any rate, nothing of the kind was taken for granted. Much earlier the French had realised that England would never allow them to remain in Holland. This was the opinion of Narbonne after an interview with Metternich on March 25th. A subsequent conversation on April 7th confirmed him in this view [1]. Castlereagh moreover took a step which was bound to settle any doubt the Allies might still have harboured on this point. They had long since formed the view that the colonial conquests of England ought to form a common fund, to be used for the purpose of obtaining counter-concessions from Napoleon when the time of settlement arrived. On July 13th Castlereagh wrote to Cathcart a statement of British policy in this respect [2]. It outlined the plan of a partial restoration graduated in accordance with the concessions agreed to by France, and made especial mention of the Dutch colonies. These were to be dealt with in accordance with the plan already communicated to William VI of Orange on May 18th. "Any claim even to partial restoration can only arise out of the complete separation of Holland from France", wrote Castlereagh. The degree of restoration was to depend on the degree of adequacy of the arrangements made for the security of Holland. The Allies were no more anxious than the French to leave England in full possession of the former Dutch colonial empire. They must naturally conclude that a satisfactory settlement, which in their view postulated the retrocession of most of these colonies, was impossible without the liberation of Holland. This method of expression by implication was perfectly understood by the Allies. In the ultimatum which Austria presented to France on August 7th she included the liberation of Holland among the terms.

[1] Sorel, VIII, p. 88. *Ibid*, p. 114.
[2] Webster, *Br. Dipl.* p. 13.

The whole month of August passed before the news of Austria's accession to the Alliance was received in England. Apart from sending Aberdeen on a mission to the Austrian emperor, the Foreign Office was merely awaiting developments. Meanwhile, the affairs of William VI were making excellent progress in England. The Prince had become personally acquainted with the Regent, who treated him with much kindness and consideration. August 12th, the Regent's birthday, was celebrated by the two Princes drinking themselves fraternally under the table [1]. William VI had gained the goodwill of a second member of the quadrumvirate which directed British foreign policy. About the middle of August William VII arrived from Spain, carrying a despatch from Wellington announcing a new victory over Soult and further deeds of valour by the young Prince [2]. He made a very favourable impression on the Regent and on the royal family. The match between him and Princess Charlotte, the Regent's daughter, was now quite openly discussed, and the idea no longer appeared incongruous to anyone, a sufficient proof of the degree in which the fortunes of the House of Orange had brightened. We do not know what passed between the father and the son, who had been separated for four and a half years. But it is probable that William VI came to an understanding with his son. The latter had not for one single instant thought of supplanting his father, and was altogether unaware of Bathurst's campaign on his behalf. It is certain, in any case, that William VII, who had until that time frequently expressed the wish to return to Germany in order to see his family, suddenly changed his mind, and discovered that by meeting his father all his family feeling was satisfied. The young Prince himself asked to be sent back to Spain [3]. It is difficult not to attribute this decision to a frank explanation with his father, which resulted in the son's loyal determination not to play the game of those who wanted to interfere

[1] Diary of Miss Knight. Cf. also *Ged.* VI, p. 1896.
[2] Aug. 1st. 1813. *Ged.* VI, p. 1885.
[3] *Ibid.*

with the natural order of succession in the House of Orange.

Bathurst took his defeat with composure. He had found opinion in governing circles divided as to the desirability of employing William VII in Spain or in Germany, and consoled himself with the thought that on the Continent, where Napoleon was making his stand at Dresden, no important developments were imminent. A month after his arrival he sent the Hereditary Prince back to Spain with despatches [1].

D. — *Castlereagh's Despatch on War Aims (Sept. 18th) — Plans of William VI*

It was only when, in the first days of September, he received the news that Austria had definitely joined the enemies of Napoleon that Castlereagh felt completely free to act in accordance with his own views. He had lived in fear of a sudden disruption of the precarious Continental alliance. Stewart's despatch of August 20th shows that a partial acceptance of their terms by Napoleon might have caused the Allies to conclude peace instantly, without any consideration of the interests of England [2]. From this moment a new stage began in Castlereagh's diplomacy. Satisfied that the alliance had at last acquired reality, he now tried to strengthen it by embodying all the separate treaties in one common and public instrument, which would give "a greater degree of union and consistency.. to the confederacy against France". Next to this primary purpose came the question of war aims: if hitherto it had been wise to discuss only such questions as were of the most vital international importance, in order to avoid differences of opinion which might have been dangerous to the harmony between the Continental Powers, the existence of the alliance made such fears groundless. A detailed agreement now became highly desirable, if no opening

[1] Bathurst to Wellington, Sept. 13th, *Ged.* VI, p. 1887.
[2] Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 77 sqq.

were to be left for efforts on the part of Napoleon to drive a wedge between the Allies.

Such was the policy which Castlereagh outlined in the important despatch which he sent to Cathcart on September 18th, 1813 [1]. In the section which dealt with war aims, Castlereagh admitted that "the further reduction of the power of France, especially on the side of Holland and Italy", had "to be pursued as the fortune of war may admit", but he pressed for agreement on these and other points in the form of secret articles which should be appended to the treaty he wished to be concluded. The fifth of the ten secret articles thus submitted by Castlereagh stipulated for "the separation, with an adequate barrier, of Holland from France". Copies of these communications were sent to the British representatives at the Austrian, Prussian, and Swedish courts, but they were instructed not to open negotiations until Cathcart had discovered the views of the Russian Emperor, who in England continued to be recognised as the senior continental partner in the Alliance.

Complete agreement and unambiguous clarity in the statement of war aims had by no means yet been attained on the Continent at the time Castlereagh's despatches were drafted. Much light still remained to be shed on the subject of Holland, in particular. On September 9th Russia concluded two treaties, one with Austria, the other with Prussia. These treaties were signed at Toeplitz. They confirmed the previous engagements made by the three continental Powers, and among other stipulations assigned the Rhine as a frontier to France, in terms that were studiously vague. Taken literally, this arrangement would have provided only for the partial liberation of Holland. This was the impression made upon the secretary of the British Embassy at Berlin, Jackson, who told the chancellor Hardenberg that the treaty of Toeplitz fell short in several respects of the former pretensions of the Allied Powers [2]. He pointed, among other defects, to the fact

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 19 sqq.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 81—84.

that Holland was not mentioned in the treaty. Hardenberg replied that according to his interpretation, the case of Holland was covered by the treaty. It is a fact that the second separate and secret article declared that the stipulations in the treaty could in no way prejudice anterior agreements between the contracting parties. Against this, however, should be placed the fact that up to the signature of the treaty of Toeplitz no engagement guaranteeing the independence of Holland had been taken by any of the Continental Powers.

Jackson was not convinced by his conversation with Hardenberg, and without delay went to consult Von Humboldt. Humboldt also pointed to the secret articles, but somewhat contradicted himself by explaining that the independence of Holland had been purposely omitted because Holland could have no independence without its colonies and commerce. As these were matters that could only be settled by Great Britain, delicacy towards that country required that a decision about Holland should be postponed until the Continental Powers had become acquainted with the British point of view. The implications of Von Humboldt's statement are many: Castlereagh's statement about the colonies, contained in his despatch of July 15th addressed to Cathcart, must have been known to the Prussians. Did they try to obtain a more precise statement? Were they attempting once more to move Great Britain to place her colonial conquests in the common pool? Either of these interpretations has some good foundation. The most relevant consideration however is probably that neither the author nor the recipient of the communication was a leading personage in the negotiations. Stewart, who transmitted Jackson's observations to Castlereagh, and who considered the treaty to be "as wise and judicious" as could be devised under the circumstances, was nevertheless bound to agree that no more than the "greater part" of Holland was secured by it.

The case of Holland was put to the Allies once more by Aberdeen who arrived at headquarters four days after the signature of the treaties of Toeplitz, and immediately

urged upon them the necessity for complete independence of Hanover and Holland. But the question of the Rhine frontier remained an object of debate for many more months. It was settled, not by the discussions of diplomats, but by the course of events, over which they had little or no control. Castlereagh's efforts were now concentrating on this main object: to urge the Allies to greater exertions in order to solve the European problem by the sword; to arm the European nations in order to use them as instruments by which the decision could be obtained. Austria had therefore to be heated out of her lukewarmness, the boyish admiration of young Aberdeen for Metternich to be moderated by the careful instillation of a few drops of criticism into his trusting mind [1]. Castlereagh counted on "the national impulse" of the Saxons, the Bavarians, the Tyrolese, and even the people of Holland and Italy "as a strong adjunct in the general effort to confine the Power of France within reasonable bounds" [2].

Plans for the participation of the Dutch in this general rising of the nations were being made in England in the months of September and October, and Castlereagh committed himself much further in approving of them than he had done before. The Dutchman Gevers was back in London [3]. In the course of August he had reported to the British Government on the situation in Holland, and his communication had caused a lively interest to be taken in the possibilities of a military exploitation of the unrest prevailing in Holland. William VI was again turning his mind towards the plans of active intervention on the Eastern frontier of Holland which he had outlined to Castlereagh in April. In conversations with his intimates and with Gevers he was already entering into details of the future organisation of Holland, discussing the relations between Church and State, finances, etc. But what interested him in the first place was the devising of means

[1] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Policy*, I, p. 412—6.
[2] Webster, *Br. Dipl.* p. 99.
[3] *Ged.* VI, p. 1886.

by which, at the head of an army of his own, he could invade Holland, and, with the help of the Dutch nation, expel the French usurpers. He realised that nothing could put him in a stronger position for negotiating with the Allies about the increase of his own power and of Dutch territory which he so much desired. At the end of September he had two conversations with Castlereagh about his military plans [1]. He drew Castlereagh's attention to the fact that many soldiers of Dutch birth, who had been compelled to serve in Napoleon's army, were now prisoners of war in the hands of the English. He pointed to the utility of joining these men together into a corps which might serve with the Allies.

Castlereagh agreed that William's plan would have great advantages, and announced that it would receive the blessing of the British government if the Prince would agree to let these Dutch levies serve as a separate unit in the army of the Swedish Crown Prince. This corps, Castlereagh submitted, would not be important enough for William VI to command in person, but he could himself appoint the officer in command. The corps would receive a name and a uniform which would clearly indicate its object. The reason for this provisional arrangement was, according to Castlereagh, that the financial measures which might be required depended on the gentlemen who controlled the finances of the country. The foreign Secretary was already under the cloud of the approaching parliamentary session, when vast financial measures would have to be submitted for approval. By levying the Dutch corps as part of the Swedish army, it would be feasible to finance it out of the general subsidies. In any case, Prince William was given the assurance that, at a later stage, the corps would be placed at his own disposal. We need therefore not see in the refusal to allow the Prince to proceed immediately to the Continent a further incident of the underground action which aimed at supplanting him in favour of his son.

[1] The second of these conversations took place on September 27th. *Ged.* VI, p. 1888 sqq.

The Prince appointed Baron von Schwartz, an officer of the old Dutch army who had since served as a colonel in the British army, to command the "Dutch Orange Legion" with the rank of Major-General. Bathurst, with whom he had an interview on September 29th, instructed Wellington to take the necessary measures for sending prisoners of war and deserters of Dutch birth over to England [1]. Sir Charles Stewart was instructed to direct and superintend the levy of two Dutch battalions in Germany [2]. William VI also offered to make arrangements with his son, in order to induce the Nassovian troops that were serving with the Franch army on the Spanish fronts to pass over to the English. In the course of October 20,000 stand of arms were placed on board ship ready for despatch whenever they might be needed in Holland. The Prince was satisfied with the progress he had thus far made in England [3].

William VI of Orange would not have been himself if he had not wanted to have more than one iron in the fire. He revealed his inner thoughts in a letter written to his mother on October 7th [4]. He was offering his services once more to Austria [5], but with more than half a wish that they might be declined, because his hopes certainly were strongest on the side of England. At the same time, if

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 1891.

[2] Castlereagh to Stewart, October 10th, 1813. *Ged.* VI, p. 1891.

[3] "I have been successful in one of the principal objects of my visit to England", he wrote to the King of Prussia, October 7th, 1813 (*Ged.* VI, p. 1892). The further history of the "Orange Legion" can be given in a few words. Recruiting started immediately in Germany, but was extremely slow, most of the Dutch deserters and prisoners of war having already been incorporated in the Swedish, Prussian, and Russian armies, from which it proved impossible to obtain their release. At the capitulation of Stettin on December 5th, 1000 men became available for the Orange Legion, which was, however, not used for the liberation of Holland. When the Prince was established in Holland at the head of affairs, the Legion was absorbed in the new Dutch army (Colenbrander *Inlijving en Opstand*, pp. 258—9).

[4] *Ged.* VI, pp. 1893—6.

[5] He was writing to Metternich on the same day, recommending his interests in Germany to the goodwill of the Austrian Emperor, and announcing the despatch of Baron von Gagern as his special representative (*Ged.* VI, pp. 1891—2).

affairs showed no great progress, he would have preferrred to serve in the Austrian army rather than remain inactive. Meanwhile by urging the English to take an Orange legion into their service, he hoped to obtain an implicit admission of the special interest taken by England in the restoration of Dutch independence under the House of Orange. Were it not that he was waiting for news from Holland, he explained, he would immediately go and take service in the army of the Crown Prince of Sweden. Whatever his personal wishes might be, the letter concluded, he had decided to stay in England in order to cultivate the good intentions of the British government.

The important events which were taking place on the Continent while preparations for the recruiting of the Orange Legion were proceeding in England did not immediately influence the situation in England itself. News travelled slowly: the momentous victory of Leipzig, which took place on October 14th–16th, became known in England only in the early days of November [1], and by that time the situation had again altered, for Napoleon had sent out a new peace feeler as a result of his defeat. The conversations which ensued, and which also touched upon the fate of Holland, had revealed how far the Allies still were from having made up their minds. In short, a chronological narration of events is out of the question, and we may, for the time being, continue the review of what took place in England.

News from Holland was meanwhile received in England from which it appeared that that country was in a state of ferment and expectation. Letters to that effect were carried by the Dutch merchant Gevers, who no longer directly communicated with the British government, but handed them over to William VI. The Prince, now virtually recognised as the representative of Holland, kept Castlereagh informed of all the news that reached him [2]. He also made further efforts to obtain financial support from England, but met with a fresh

[1] *Farrington Diary*, Vol. VII.
[2] *Ged.* VI, p. 1944—49.

refusal due to the fact that such expenditure could not be worked into the plans which Vansittart, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was on the point of placing before Parliament. The impression which the Prince received from his conversations with Castlereagh, and in particular from that which took place on October 26th or 27th, was that the British Government did not wish to envisage distant eventualities, and intended to concentrate upon matters of immediate consequence. At the same time, the Government realised and admitted that Dutch affairs might acquire immediate importance at any moment, and Castlereagh assured the Prince that they were among those that interested the Government most of all [1]. Castlereagh did more than ply the Prince of Orange with these declarations. On one of the last days of October he spoke to Jacobi, the Prussian Ambassador in London, and stated his opinion that a more monarchic form of government was desirable for Holland [2]. Jacobi, who was secretly keeping the Prince of Orange informed of these conversations, told Castlereagh that it would be useful to aim at "a military co-operation" on the side of Holland from the moment that the Allied armies approached the Dutch frontier. He was, in fact, trying to persuade Castlereagh that the time was near at hand when Dutch affairs would have acquired the urgency which warranted more active steps.

E. — *Castlereagh's Memorandum on Holland (Nov. 5th)*

At the moment when these conversations took place in London the military decision had fallen already. The victory at Leipzig had opened to the Allies the way to the Rhine, and soon their right wing was on the point of touching Holland. This news arrived in London about November 1st. The time had come for England to inform

[1] William VI to his mother, October 26th—27th. *Ged.* VI pp. 1944—7.
[2] William VI to his agent Gagern, November 2nd. 1812. *Ged.* VI, pp. 1948—9.

her Allies in greater detail of her views about the future of Holland. Castlereagh drew up a "Memorandum respecting Holland", dated November 5th and despatched on that day to the British representatives at all the Allied Courts. They were instructed to take the earliest opportunity of submitting the memorandum to the sovereigns to whom they were accredited, and to ask the aid of these monarchs "in carrying this important object into effect" [1].

The Memorandum of November 5th deserves careful analysis. It is a definite advance on anything so far undertaken concerning Dutch affairs by British diplomacy in the course of the year 1813. Up to this moment, war aims had been put forward in a tentative way only, because the avoidance of a premature peace had been the main concern of British statesmen. An early peace still remained a possibility, but it would not be a peace due to weariness or defeat, and the Allies would be able to make their wishes respected, even if they did not actually dictate the terms. Hence it became imperative for Great Britain to speak in no uncertain voice about an object which touched her interest so directly.

The document opened by displaying the two strongest cards held by Great Britain. The first was that the people of Holland were ripe for revolt. There was no admission of the right of self-determination in this statement, which merely established a fact having a direct bearing upon the military situation. The Dutch nation, by its frame of mind, might prove a valuable adjunct in the victorious progress of the Allied armies. The second card was that Great Britain intended to intervene in the liberation of Holland in a manner more direct than she had hitherto been able to adopt in continental affairs. It was therefore announced that Britain was giving authority to the Prince of Orange to levy troops in Germany, and that the corps thus recruited would be in British pay. The embarkation of arms ready for use in Holland, and the existence of an understanding between the Dutch

[1] *F. O. Russia*, 83; *F. O. Austria*, 101. The Memorandum in *Ged.* VI, p. 1950—52.

malcontents and England were announced as further proofs of British activity.

There followed a statement of British views on the subject of the Restoration of Holland. Incidentally, in the earlier part of the document, the inclination of the Dutch nation to return to its ancient institutions had been mentioned, together with their desire to strengthen the executive power they wished to entrust to the House of Orange. The way in which these views were put forward shows that Castlereagh did not consider it necessary to make them the object of further debate. The restoration of Holland under a strengthened Orange dynasty was part of the natural course of events, an obvious item in the liquidation of the Napoleonic interlude.

First among the debatable points came the frontier of restored Holland. The "defensive treaties lately concluded by the continental Allies" specified the Rhine as the boundary to be required from France. "It has afforded the British Government great satisfaction", wrote Castlereagh, "to have received official assurance, that they (the Allies) do not consider themselves as thereby precluded from proposing and insisting upon those arrangements which may be necessary to the general system of Europe in modification of that outline". These were brave words, and one wonders what form this "official assurance", of which no evidence exists, had been given. Why should Castlereagh have felt it necessary to argue, in the next paragraph of his memorandum, that "in point of fact, the Rhine never was insisted upon even by France as a boundary to Holland, whilst that state was suffered to retain even the semblance of independence"? Why did Castlereagh write to Aberdeen, on the same day, when transmitting the ratifications of the treaty of Toeplitz, that "in the secret articles as signed.... the reference to Holland, by taking the Rhine throughout as the barrier, amounts to a dismemberment, leaving the most important divisions of the United Provinces in the hands of the enemy", without at the same time mentioning the alleged "official assurance" to the contrary?

Whatever the true position may have been, Castlereagh chose to assume in his semi-public utterance that the idea of the Rhine boundary had been given up. The Allies might then take the hint and act upon the same assumption, which would obviate the necessity of further negotiations upon a point where the mind of the British government was definitely made up. Having therefore postulated the restoration of Holland in her boundaries of 1792, Castlereagh put the following alternative: either — and this was in his view a highly desirable object — one of the great military powers of Germany would be "interposed as a protection between France and Holland", or else "an adequate military frontier" should be given to the latter country. It would then become essential that Antwerp, "with such other extension of territory as may be necessary", should be assigned to Holland.

Castlereagh thereupon proceeded to explain how it was in the interest of the Continent that Holland should be severed from France. His first argument was that "if in no other point of view than as the natural centre of the money transactions of Europe, all independent nations are interested in its being again raised to the rank of a free and independent State". It is doubtful whether this argument would have counted as much with the continental Allies as with the British. At a time when communications were still slow, it was in the interest of England that the money market of the world should not be too far distant from London. But to the Allies Amsterdam might well have appeared insufficiently central, and it is probable that the Germans at least would have been disposed to favour the rival claims of Hamburg or Frankfort.

On the other hand, Castlereagh was not merely pleading for the return to the situation which existed before the French Revolution. Amsterdam had still some serious claims to consideration. There had been no trace of decline before 1790, but before the French invasion the credit of the Bank of Amsterdam had already fallen considerably. In 1796 the centre of the money market started

to move towards Hamburg, and from 1802 the Bank of Amsterdam existed only in name. But if Amsterdam suffered very badly indeed, it never lost its position completely. During the French occupation, a considerable amount of Dutch capital, and several important Dutch capitalists, had found safety in England, and to the end of the Napoleonic wars Amsterdam preserved a very honourable place in the system of world credit[1]. The strength of Amsterdam as a financial centre had proved to be something that was independent of mere locality. But this fact in itself proved that Amsterdam's re-establishment as a centre of the world's money transactions was not indispensable to the interests of the Continent. Castlereagh's statement was therefore more an expression of British preference than an argument that would of necessity appeal to the continental Allies[2].

The second argument advanced by Castlereagh was "the necessity of narrowing the hostile frontiers of France towards Germany". For this reason it was of vital consequence that Holland, full of resources, strongly covered with defences, and opening numerous débouchés to a French army, should be wrested from France.

The time for a frank statement having now apparently arrived, Castlereagh wound up his arguments by an unambiguous admission of England's direct concern in the

[1] Baasch, *Holländische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, pp. 219—22, 388, 418.

[2] This became clear very shortly afterwards, for no sooner had Holland recovered her independence than England made an effort once more to carry on her financial operations through Amsterdam. As early as December 3rd, 1813, the departure of two British commissioners for Amsterdam, who were to direct the issue and circulation of credit bills and the redemption of promissory notes issued in favour of Russia, was announced. (*F. O. Russia*, 83). Amsterdam had been pointed out by the British Government "as the most fit place for transacting this business". (*F. O. Russia*, 92). On February 22nd, 1814, the Russian Ambassador Lieven informed the Foreign Office that the Russian Commissioners for negotiating the promissory notes had arrived in Amsterdam. He proposed that they should move to Frankfort "as being nearer the theatre of war". (*F. O. Russia*, 95). On February 25th, Bathurst, the Acting Foreign Secretary, replied that the British Government would not object, if this change of venue were really desirable, but he added "Amsterdam must in general be considered.... far better adapted to pecuniary negotiations on an extended scale" (*ibid.*).

matter of Dutch independence. "Unless material reduction can be effected in the extent of coast which France occupies at present", wrote Castlereagh, "England will be obliged to turn all her attention and resources to the increase of her marine, and will be comparatively unequal to assist the Continent in any future struggle to which it may be exposed, either with troops or with money". But, not satisfied with the threat that England would withdraw behind her naval barrier and disinterest herself from the Continent if her Dutch plan were rejected, Castlereagh actually appealed to the Allies to assist in putting the plan into execution as a recognition for the services rendered by England to their cause during the Napoleonic wars. "The Powers of the Continent will no doubt feel interested in upholding the strength and influence of a Nation which has so perseveringly devoted all its faculties to re-establish on a firm and lasting basis the independence of other nations".

Consistently true to his natural caution, Castlereagh deemed it necessary, even while taking a step which brought the question of Holland into a far more advanced stage, to distinguish between immediate and more distant objects. "The immediate object of this Memorandum is to point the action and early efforts of the Allies to the recovery of Holland". He ended by the promise to settle the question of the former Dutch colonies with a disposition "liberally to strengthen Holland in proportion as that important portion of Europe can be rendered secure by adequate arrangements against the Power of France", thus again assocating the Allies, in their desire not to allow a disproportionate increase of the British Empire, in his plan for strengthening the Dutch frontier.

The head of the House of Orange was informed, as a matter of course, of the new step taken in favour of his cause. Two days after the memorandum was drafted, on November 7th, Castlereagh received the Prince of Orange and handed him a copy. The Prince read it immediately and proceeded to discuss it with Castlereagh. He said that he felt deeply grateful to England, whose intentions were

so completely in conformity with his own, that he could not have expressed them differently had he been entrusted with the drafting of the document. This was not an idle compliment, for William VI repeated this opinion to his German chargé d'affaires, von Gagern [1]. At the same time he explained with complete frankness what, in his own opinion, would be a suitable frontier for the restored Dutch state. These views were far from modest, and Castlereagh asked the Prince to put them down in writing, as he had done after the first conversation which had taken place between them. Two days later the plan, written in the Prince's own hand, was delivered to Castlereagh [2].

A survey of the Prince's desiderata and arguments may be reserved for the chapter which will deal with the southern frontier of the Netherlands. But the immediate question arises, how the Prince could be so utterly satisfied with Castlereagh's memorandum, seeing that this expressed a decided preference for the interposition of a German power between Holland and France, which would have made it impossible for Holland to acquire a substantial part of the Southern Netherlands. Either the Prince must have considered that this profession on the part of Castlereagh was only meant to conciliate the Continental powers, and in particular Prussia and Austria, or else he must have reasoned that, like the English, he might rest satisfied with the pursuit of immediate objects, while leaving it to time and later endeavour to realise more distant aims [3].

[1] November 11th, 1813. *Ged.* VI, p. 1957.
[2] *Ged.* VI, pp. 1954—56.
[3] While Castlereagh was taking William VI into his confidence and thought of him as the head of the restored Dutch state, Bathurst continued to regret the check to his campaign in favour of William VII. On Nov. 10th he wrote to Wellington deploring the absence of a decided spirit of insurrection in Holland, and expressing the desire that William VII should soon join his relatives in Berlin. "He may create by that means.... an interest which his father has not, and it might much facilitate the re-establishment of his family.... There is something so amiable in the Hereditary Prince that it is impossible not to wish him success". (*Ged.* VI, p. 1956). There is in Bathurst's tenacity more than animosity against William VI. He must have felt a strong inclination towards the young man whom he wanted so much to put into his

F. — *The Frankfort Proposals and the Rhine Frontier*

While under the impression of the victory of Leipzig, these moves and counter-moves were taking place in England, important events by which the fate of Holland might have become affected were taking place on the Continent. On October 17th, the day when there was a comparative lull in the course of the Battle of the Nations, Napoleon had talked to the Austrian general Merfeldt, who had been made a prisoner. The conversation was an informal peace overture, and Merfeldt was released on parole in order to transmit it to the Allies. We are not concerned in this case with the genuineness of the move, but we may accept the view that Napoleon, who remained on his guard during the whole conversation, was honest enough in what he said. Merfeldt asked Napoleon what were his views about Holland. Merfeldt may or may not have been informed of the intentions of the Allies, but he mentioned Holland because it was common knowledge that this was a question of the highest importance to England. "We would have to come to an understanding", said Napoleon, thus giving the vaguest of all possible replies, seeing that the word Holland had more than one connotation: it might even be taken to mean no more than the truncated kingdom of Louis Napoleon.

The overture to Merfeldt afforded Metternich an opportunity for embarking upon the complicated series of moves which culminated in the Frankfort proposals. Although the facts of these intricate negotiations are now well known, their interpretation remains obscure to the last degree. Sorel has given a highly imaginative story of the working of Metternich's mind and of the part played by the British Ambassador Aberdeen. On October 24th Baron de Saint Aignan, the French Minister at Weimar, was made a prisoner by the Allies. From October 26th to 29th Metternich had a series of talks with this

father's place. He maintained his affectionate patronage for many years afterwards, and in the affair of the intended marriage with the daughter of the Regent, William VII had no stauncher friend than Bathurst.

French diplomat. He expressed the opinion that England was more moderate than was generally thought, but that it might be necessary to satisfy her by granting independence to Holland. According to Sorel, Metternich wanted the war to continue, in order to remove Napoleon from the throne, and to prepare the way for a regency of the daughter of the Austrian Emperor. He therefore made sure that, even if Napoleon proved willing to accept the terms which he, Metternich, would offer, England would afterwards object to them and make peace impossible. He told Aberdeen that he expected Napoleon to accept his terms, well knowing that Aberdeen would thereupon immediately report to his Government, which would certainly reject the peace [1].

There are good reasons, however, to believe that Metternich really would have welcomed an arrangement with Napoleon. He was disturbed by the Russian ambitions in Poland and by the Prussian desire to acquire Saxony, and did not want utterly to crush France, a Power which might one day help to make weight against Russia and Prussia. On the other hand, against the growing influence of these two Powers, he wanted the immediate assistance of England. But England would not be satisfied before Holland was safe from France. Negotiations would be useful to Metternich in any case: either they would lead to the immediate peace which suited him, or else they would cause discord in the French nation, which was the next best thing. In a letter to Castlereagh, dated October 29th [2], Aberdeen reported on Metternich's intentions and on the proposals that were to be entrusted to Saint Aignan. "He is to repeat," wrote Aberdeen, "the proposal of the grand geographical features of the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, as the limits of the French Empire.... I thought it right to ascertain as nearly as possible the precise understanding and intentions of Prince Metternich respecting the Rhine and the Alps. The sum of our conversation on the subject, which was long and to me

[1] Sorel, VIII, p. 203—5.
[2] *F. O. Austria*, 102.

very satisfactory, was this: That the absolute independence of Holland and Italy were conditions *sine quibus non*, and that this could not be too explicitly stated in any overture however general; but that the precise line which should denote the frontier of France towards these countries could not be laid down without difficulty and inconvenience at the present moment, and must to a certain degree be necessarily influenced by the relative position of the belligerents at the moment of the negotiations." Aberdeen concluded his despatch by asking for the expression of any views which Castlereagh might have formed on the subject, "for the timely information of the Austrian Government."

The offer, in the shape in which Metternich finally made it to Saint Aignan, who had been moved, with the Allied Headquarters, to Frankfort, left the question of the northern frontier of France undecided. It was framed in a way which might conceivably lead to peace, without at the same time finally and professedly disregarding the special wishes of England. On the eve of the offer, Metternich again assured Aberdeen "that the specific line of the French frontier towards Holland and Piedmont should be open to discussion, taking care to make the independence of Italy and Holland conditions of peace *sine quibus non*" [1]. As far as Holland was concerned, this reservation was stated without apparent equivocation in Metternich's final conversation with Saint Aignan, who reported [2] that Metternich said "that also the Dutch State should cease to be an object of negotiation, going out always from the principle that it should be independent." Did these words really settle the matter beyond any possibility of doubt? Could not an independent State of Holland be established with the Rhine as southern boundary? How could the French otherwise interpret a stipulation made at the same time as the offer of the

[1] Aberdeen to Castlereagh, November 8th, 1813, Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 108.

[2] Saint Aignan's summary, written immediately after the conversation. Angeberg, *Congrès de Vienne*, Vol. I, p. 76.

Rhine as boundary? Yet such was not the interpretation which Aberdeen was led to accept. Much has been said about Aberdeen's credulity and the way in which Metternich was able to play with him. But Metternich had at his disposal an argument which was as far fetched as it was geographically incorrect, by the use of which he could at any time escape from the consequences of the statements he had made to Saint Aignan. The argument, in all its beautiful simplicity, was merely this: that the Rhine ended at Dusseldorf [1]!

At Allied headquarters the numerous discussions that were taking place, immediately after the proposal had been made to Saint Aignan, between the British ambassadors and the sovereigns and ministers to whom they were accredited, proved that the matter of Holland was by no means finally settled [2]. Nor, at the time when the

[1] We possess a clue to Metternich's line of argument which makes it easier to understand how Aberdeen could read into the Frankfort proposals a much more definite step in favour of Holland than was detected in them by Saint Aignan. At the P. R. O. in *F. O. Russia* 92 (*Domestic Various*), a volume of miscellaneous papers covering the period from October to December, there is a small piece of paper, undated, which probably explains the mental process of Aberdeen, if not that of Metternich himself. At the back of the paper is written "Memorandum of Pozzo di Borgo", and the text, scribbled by the same hasty hand, reads, "Les Alpes Rhin et Pyrénées: L'étendue à donner à ces limites, et le sort des places qui y sont situées. Afin d'assurer militairement la frontière contre les attaques de la France, formeront l'objet des négociations suivantes (?) La question des frontières de la Hollande est indépendente, et le Cte. de Metternich regarde les limites du Rhin comme terminées à Dusseldorf. Le fleuve prend depuis cette ville le nom de Waal". This little *aide mémoire* was probably drawn up in the course of a conversation between Pozzo di Borgo and Castlereagh or an official of the Foreign Office during Pozzo's mission to London in December 1813. The confidant of the Emperor Alexander must certainly have been cross-examined about the real meaning of the Frankfort proposals, which continued to exercise the minds of the British ministers.

[2] When Alexander broached the subject of a renewal of the Treaty of Subsidy, he gave Cathcart the assurance that he was inclined in favour of the inclusion of Holland with a barrier among the expressly mentioned aims of the treaty. But the Emperor added "that perhaps it was better to avoid binding more than was necessary by treaty" (Cathcart to Castlereagh, November 11th, 1813, Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 39). Hardenberg, who did not like the Frankfort proposals (Sorel, VIII, p. 211), told the British secretary of Embassy Jackson that they

Frankfort proposals were being formulated, had Napoleon any thought of giving up Holland[1]. On November 15th he saw Saint Aignan, and the next day he answered the proposals without accepting them, merely expressing his readiness to negotiate. Napoleon's answer was received by Metternich on November 25th. But neither the answer nor the reply it elicited from Metternich could affect the fate of Holland, which had already been settled in a different manner. On November 20th, at 3 p.m., the semaphoric telegraph at Yarmouth had transmitted to the British Foreign Office the following message: "Complete revolt in Holland. Dutch Baron on his way to Prince of Orange. Texel fleet in mutiny." We must now turn to Holland and pass in review the events which had led to the despatch of this message.

G. — *Holland in 1813 — The Popular Anti-French Movement — It Expects the Arrival of William VII — This is a Result of British Propaganda*

The Dutch had not taken too unkindly to the annexation of their country in 1810. The situation at the end of King Louis Bonaparte's reign had become unbearable. Incorporation in the French Empire could scarcely make matters worse, and would at any rate make them clearer. Napoleon was received with enthusiasm by the populace

insisted on the independence of Holland, and the demolition of all fortresses on the Rhine (Jackson to Stewart, November 11th, 1813. Webster *Br. Dipl.*, p. 87). A few days later, however, Cathcart showed himself anything but hopeful on the subject of Holland. "I said in a former letter", he wrote to Castlereagh, "that I did not think there would be much objection to naming the independence of Holland and Italy with that of Spain. Though the views are the same, I now think all the Powers would hesitate to engaging for anything but the Peninsula and Sicily in precise terms" (November 17th. — *F. O. Supp. Russia*, 343).

[1] On November 6th he had written to his mother that Holland was a French country and would remain so forever. On November 11th he told the *Conseil d'Etat* that France needed the mouths of the northern rivers, and that he would rather cut the dykes and flood Holland than give it up. (Sorel, VIII, p. 218) He repeated his threat to Schimmelpenninck, the ex-grand pensionary of the Batavian Republic, at a levée on November 16th (*Ged.* VI, p. 300), and tried to carry it out in December.

in most places, though not everywhere, during his visit in September and October 1811. But enthusiasm did not last long[1]. The stagnation which accompanied the continental system caused widespread suffering while the new form of administration, alien to a population with a tradition of decentralised and dilatory government, and the ever growing demands of the French armies for men soon created a spirit which filled the French officials in Holland with apprehension.

Disaffection became more acute as a result of the Russian campaign of 1812. Holland contributed some 15,000 men to the *Grande Armée*. A few hundred only returned, and they had tales to tell which did not inflame with martial ardour the conscripts of the class of 1812 whom Napoleon called up on January 20th, 1813. It is important to remark that the movement of dissatisfaction and even of opposition which resulted from the situation in Holland and from the European events during the year 1813 divided itself into two streams which remained absolutely distinct, and only mingled in November 1813, when a crisis arose as a direct result of the battle of Leipzig. There was an anti-French movement among the popular classes, and another movement in the upper class. The first only was evident; it was also the least effective, although it was this movement which attracted the attention of the British Government.

The crowd has an element of universality. To stimuli of the same nature it reacts in a fairly uniform manner in every country. A Dutch mob may perhaps not be so easily swayed into the collective madness displayed by the mob in the South of France during the days of the Terror. But the difference is one of intensity rather than of quality. Whatever its nationality, the mob is ill-informed, avid of rumour, however little authenticated, and tenacious in its beliefs, however often contradicted. It is reckless, does not pause to calculate the proportion

[1] During the receptions of the notables in various towns Napoleon behaved with an overbearing rudeness that must have alienated many of the most influential among his new subjects.

between the means at its disposal and the resistance it has to overcome. Moreover, it likes violence for the sake of violence, and is essentially negative and destructive. Devilliers Duterrage, director-general of police in Amsterdam, understood all this very well. After the troubles which took place in April 1813, Savary, the minister of police in Paris, had expressed surprise at the excesses committed by a calm and patient people like the Dutch. "Calm and patience," replied Devilliers, "are indeed qualities of the commercial portion of this nation, but not of the workmen and artisans. Nothing is more cowardly, nothing more ferocious than this class. In the revolutions of the past it has displayed its love of pillage, and has spared neither the dominant party nor the oppressed. This is the class which at the present juncture is most to be feared by everyone who counts for anything" [1].

The mob is idealistic withal. It does not riot for the sake of lucre, it loves a principle and a battlecry. To the Dutch population of 1813 patriotism could provide neither. A generation had grown to manhood since the country had become a province of France in all but name. But there remained one battlecry — the name of Orange. If the Oranges themselves had been forgotten, their name still remained. When during Napoleon's visit in 1811 the fishermen of Scheveningen shouted themselves hoarse with enthusiastic cries of "Vive l'Empereur", they mingled their cheers in all innocence with the ancient shout of "Oranje boven", which appeared to them the natural way of acclaiming authority.

Such was the popular movement in Holland in the year 1813: ill-informed, sporadic, reckless, and Orangist. It was already smouldering at the beginning of the year, when Lebrun, the French Governor General of the Dutch departments, repeatedly asked for troops because he expected trouble at the time of the ballot for conscription [2]. The trouble broke out in the village of Oud Beijerland, where the peasants, armed with pitchforks and flails,

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 661.
[2] *Ged.* VI, pp. 240, 243.

threatened to destroy the ballot-boxes. The troops fired and six men were killed. Rioting also occurred in several other villages in the south west of the country. The month of March was quieter, but the Governor General still noticed anxiety and restlessness among his *administrés* [1]. In April all men between the ages of twenty and sixty were compelled to register for service in the national guard. This caused disorder and rioting in Rotterdam, Scheveningen, The Hague, in the region of the Zaan, and throughout the country which at the present day forms the two provinces of North and South Holland. At Leiden on April 20th, five hundred peasants arrived from the countryside, occupied the town, and remained in possession for more than twenty-four hours. During all these commotions posters bearing the words "Oranje boven" had appeared on the walls of many towns, and Orange flags were hoisted from the steeples. In the east of the country the new levies deserted in crowds.

The French, who had made a show of mercy after the first risings of February, became ruthless when the movement spread. In the course of the year seventy-one persons appeared before the military commissions that were established to deal with the troubles. Of these, thirteen were executed, seven deported, thirteen condemned to penal servitude, nine imprisoned, and one placed under police supervision. Only two were acquitted. Three persons were condemned to death *in contumaciam* [2]. As a result of the energetic action of the French the movement petered out. It had at no time possessed any chance of success: the troops, even those of Dutch birth, were loyal to the Empire, the administration was functioning normally, the police were incredibly well-informed. The rioters had no unity of plan and no central guidance. But there was real conformity of aspirations between all the isolated risings and disturbances of the first half of the year 1813. The rumours which were spread can be reduced to one pattern: allied troops were on their way to

[1] *Ged.* VI, pp. 251 sqq.
[2] Blok, IV, pp. 172 sqq.

Holland, and were going to restore the House of Orange. The preoccupation of the public with the House of Orange was evident, and the French were perfectly well aware of it. In February 1813 a play was given in Amsterdam entitled *The Taking of Breda*. Its hero was a Prince of Orange, and the play was such an immense popular success that the French police judged it advisable to stop the performances [1].

The most remarkable aspect of the rumours that circulated about the House of Orange was that they always mentioned the name of William VII, never that of William VI. In the month of January Amsterdam was whispering that William VII, who had displayed great military talents in Spain, was going to marry the daughter of the Prince of Wales, would land in the spring, conquer the country, and become Grand Duke of Holland [2]. Conversations of this nature frequently appear in the reports of the police spies from all over the country. As in Bohemia during the war of 1914-18, coins of the liberated state were already in circulation before the authority which could issue them was established or recognised. Fremin de Beaumont, prefect of the *Département des Bouches du Rhin*, reported the existence of such coins at Arnhem, in the most Orangist part of the country. Similar coins or medals were also discovered in other departments, and the most significant fact about them is that they bore the inscription, "William VII, Prince of Orange, King of Holland." They were much in demand, and were bought at four times their face value [3].

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 600.
[2] *Ged.* VI, pp. 237, 440, 442, 593.
[3] *Ged.* VI, pp. 440, 621. In July, 1813 the French discovered that a print showing a portrait of Prince William VII, described as "The Restorer of Dutch Freedom", was being publicly sold. (*Ibid.*, p. 681) At the beginning of October the police came across a broadsheet which may be reproduced as a specimen of many that were in circulation. It is in the form of a mock-creed: "I believe in Alexander I, powerful Emperor of all the Russias, Protector of the Right of Europe, and in William VII, who was conceived of the Spirit of Nassau, born of the Princess of Orange, who suffered under the French rabble, descended into England, was resurrected in Spain, is seated at the right hand of my-

After the battle of Leipzig rumours became even more insistant and more circumstantial. In the month of October it was again said that William VII was going to marry the daughter of the English Regent, and it was added that he was about to enter Holland at the head of an army corps under the Prince Royal of Sweden, and that England had given the Dutch colonies as his future wife's dowry [1]. England, in fact, held almost as important a part in the wild talk of the period as William VII himself. On November 9th, all The Hague was expecting that a capitulation was going to be read in public announcing the surrender of the town to the English.

There is a remarkable mixture of fiction and of truth in all this popular talk. Not the least remarkable, perhaps, is the fact that as early as January 1813 something had transpired about the possibility of a marriage between William VII and the Prince Regent's daughter, at a time when such plans were far from being common knowledge. Still more striking is the fact that William VI was entirely ignored as a possible liberator. The Orangists in Holland had no grudge whatsoever against William VI, who was not even Stadholder at the time of the French invasion. They had no shadow of a reason for wishing to upset the hereditary principle. Restoration movements tend to be over-punctilious about points of legitimism. When one reflects that the popular movement had no central organ, no cohesion and no agreed plan, the unanimous belief that the Prince who was going to occupy the position of his forebears was William VII becomes even more puzzling. One cannot help looking for outside inspiration. It could not have originated among the continental Allies: Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and Austria looked upon William VI as the head of the House of Orange. With him only had they negotiated, their Kings

lord Wellington, from where he will come and judge the French still in existence, and the Patriots (i.e. the anti Orangists) with their partisans. I believe in the restoration of Orange and in rest eternal. Forgiveness to all those who have worked blindly to the ruin of the fatherland". (*Ibid*, p. 417).
[1] *Ged.* VI, pp. 469, 478, 706.

and Emperors knew him as the legitimate claimant to the position of the Oranges in Holland, and to him alone did they give such support as they were willing to vouchsafe to Holland. England was the only country where thoughts existed of William VII as a Dutch pretender. The support which William VI succeeded in obtaining in England was discreet and unvocal. Castlereagh's acceptance of him was gradual, and shown by implication rather than by positive declaration. But Bathurst's partisanship in favour of William VII was avowed and tenacious. He was not alone in holding his views [1]. And opportunity for making these views known in Holland was not lacking.

There is sufficient evidence of the existence of British propaganda in Holland during the year 1813. Notwithstanding the blockade, Dutch fishing boats were allowed to go out into the North Sea. Sloops of the British navy would sometimes hail them and throw on board broadsheets with news. There is a case which came to the knowledge of the French police, in which information about Wellington's victories in Spain was conveyed in this manner [2]. When the French found out that such communications with the enemy had taken place, they would place a village in quarantine, and keep the men ashore for some time. But the fishermen were all devoted Orangists, and we may take it that they did not hasten to inform the French each time they were hailed by an English ship. A certain amount of smuggling was also carried on by the fishermen, and this again would not make them over-communicative towards the French authorities.

Other channels were open to British propaganda in Holland. One of them was international finance, as the French themselves suspected. De Celles, prefect of the department of the Zuiderzee, wrote to de Montalivet, minister of the interior in Paris, that he had suspicions about the loyalty of the famous banking house of Hope [3]. "It is deplorable," he said, "that a house of

[1] *Ged.* VI, p. 1878.
[2] *Ged.* VI, p. 586.
[3] November 11th, 1813. *Ged.* VI, p. 479.

which the principal capitalists are in Spain and Russia, should be authorised to live as it were in Amsterdam, to dominate the market, and constantly to send emissaries to Germany and even to Paris." There is no actual proof of activities of the House of Hope or any other banks in the service of British propaganda. It remains possible, however, if not probable, that use was made of the facilities at their disposal for operations in keeping with the inclination of their principals.

The existence of a popular movement was known to the English government. It was, even, the only anti-French movement in Holland of which they, or William VI, had any knowledge. The merchant Gevers reported on it, and exaggerated its importance in the same way as, in later years, he exaggerated the part he had himself played. In all their plans for direct intervention in Holland, the English counted on the support of this popular movement. They pictured Holland as a second Prussia, where thousands of able-bodied men were only waiting for a signal. Twenty-thousand stand of arms were, as we have seen, held in readiness for the Dutch insurgents, to be sent the moment the Allied vanguard touched the eastern frontier of Holland. With rebellion in their rear, the French would have to fall back; the whole of Holland, and probably the Southern Netherlands too, would be liberated without the need of entering into dangerous negotiations with Napoleon. Britain would then have obtained the settlement of the continental question in which she was most directly interested without the matter of colonial restitution or the right of search having to be raised; while the Dutch colonies could become the subject of a private arrangement between Britain and Holland, a procedure which attracted London far more than that of internationalising the question.

That such were indeed the views held by the British authorities in the year 1813 may be inferred from a memorandum dated December 17th, 1813, which was sent to the British representatives abroad. This memorandum [1]

[1] See Appendix B.

criticised the Allied plan for the campaign of the spring of 1814, and tried to prove the necessity of displaying greater energy in the Netherlands, instead of throwing the great mass of the Allied forces upon distant and extreme points. It pointed to the innumerable advantages which would have resulted from an earlier application of the principles it was defending. If 50,000 men had advanced from Cologne upon Brussels in November, 1813, the memorandum submitted, they could have marched unopposed along the southern frontier of Holland and, aided by the spirit of resistance known to pervade the Netherlands (i.e. the Southern Netherlands), they could have obtained the undisputed possession of Holland, Austrian Flanders, and Antwerp. The case of the Southern Netherlands is similar to that of the Northern. A popular rising is expected to help the advance of the allied armies. It will be prepared by organised British propaganda. We shall see this propaganda at work in a later chapter. In Holland, where up to November 1813 there was still a regularly organised French administration, British propaganda could not work with the same ease as it did during 1814 in the Southern Netherlands. But we may accept its existence without hesitation, and we shall naturally draw the conclusion that the Dutch, who had no reason whatever for wishing to pass over William VI in favour of his son, would never have conceived the idea of this deviation from the principle of heredity if its seed had not been sown by British propaganda under the direction of those members of the Cabinet who were hostile to the head of the House of Orange.

H. — *The Anti-French Movement among the Dutch Bourgeoisie and the Liberation of Holland*

The popular movement, which was the only one to come to the notice of the British Government and of William VI, had no decisive influence upon the course of affairs. The gesture which acquired so much importance in

the eyes of Europe, the gesture by which the Dutch inscribed themselves upon the list of independent nations, was made by the bourgeoisie, or rather, by a very small number of members of that class. National differences are always most marked in the middle class. During the critical year 1813 the Dutch bourgeoisie displayed all the self-control, level-headedness, and determination which are usually attributed to the Dutch nation as a whole. They wanted independence even more intensely than the popular classes. But they realised that against the strongly organised French Empire violence was of no avail, unless assisted by the defeat of Napoleon's armies on the battlefield. It should be clearly understood, at the same time, that the French régime counted many friends among the leading classes in Holland. When the peasants occupied Leiden on April 20th, the students assisted the French troops in the fighting which enabled them to re-capture the town on the following day. This was partly the result of friendliness towards the existing régime, but much more of a distrust towards all popular movements.

An event occurred, however, which put the wavering loyalty of the bourgeoisie to a severe test. At the beginning of April the sons of men of rank, who had been able to avoid conscription by buying substitutes, were called up to form a "guard of honour" for the Emperor, mainly in order to be held as hostages for the good behaviour of their fathers. This measure was bitterly resented, and in several cases compulsion was needed to determine the young men to answer the call. The French realised that this opposition was far more significant than the popular movement with which they were having to cope [1]. A little later the French noticed the marked reserve of the leading families, and Devilliers complained that the Dutch members of the senate who happened to be in Holland did nothing whatever to give the authorities the assistance of

[1] On June 11th de Celles wrote to Savary: "The seditious movements of Leiden, Zaandam, etc., etc., were far less to be feared than the highly avowed disobedience of several powerful families in Holland. Peasants are only instruments, but rich people might be able to put those instruments to use". (*Ged.* VI, p. 671).

their prestige. "They stay in their country houses," he wrote to Réal, "and only come to town when they have to attend a family gathering. And then they pay no calls, and refrain from mentioning any of the Emperor's victories" [1].

Behind this reserve, and quite aloof from the popular movement, there existed a small group of men who were laying plans for action. Their leader was Gijsbert Karel van Hogendorp. More steadfast than the head of the House of Orange, he had never wavered in his conviction that one day Holland would return to her ancient freedom under the leadership of Orange. He belonged to an old patrician family of Rotterdam, where he was born in 1771. He studied at the military academy of Berlin, became an officer of the Guards in Holland, and occupied the leisure of garrison life by reading history and law, until he was able to take his degree at Leiden University. In those days of anti-Orangist passions, the young officer had the courage to dedicate his doctoral dissertation to the then Hereditary Prince of Orange (William VI).

Van Hogendorp left the army in 1787, was called to the bar at The Hague, and obtained a position in the government of the town of Rotterdam. Upon the arrival of the French in 1795 he returned to private life, was for some time the head of a business house in Amsterdam, and finally retired into the country. There he gave all his time to study, and wrote an essay on the History of the United Provinces, and later a draft constitution for a liberated Holland.

As early as September 1801, in the midst of an atmosphere of resignation and pusillanimity, Van Hogendorp had had the courage to raise his voice in favour of the House of Orange when he made a public protest against the coup d'état which changed the form of the Batavian Republic's government with the connivance of the French troops of occupation. But Van Hogendorp was no conspirator. He did not evolve a real plan of action, and, at least until the middle of 1813, did not establish anything

[1] *Ibid*, June 12th, 1813.

that savoured of a secret society. He received a good many visitors, mostly members of the old patriciate. To them he imparted his ideals and his hopes. Acquaintanceships were formed between various of Van Hogendorp's callers, who parted again to spread the doctrine of liberation among their own friends. In this way sympathisers were acquired, often unknown to one another, in many parts of the country [1].

The most important and the most devoted of these auxiliaries was Van der Duyn van Maasdam, a member of the nobility of the Province of Holland, a cultured, clear-headed, and fearless man. Van Hogendorp also kept close contact with several retired officers of the old Dutch army, the principal of whom was Count Leopold van Limburg Stirum, who had no personal ambitions, but was prepared to place himself at the head of a revolution at The Hague.

It is interesting to note that in the circle of Van Hogendorp also there were whispers of the possibility of Prince William VII being placed at the head of the state when Holland was liberated. There is no reason to believe that in this more enlightened circle the idea had germinated in a spontaneous manner. It was only an echo of the rumours of the street. Van Hogendorp showed no hesitation whatever in placing his influence on the side of William VI. He declared to his friends that "they must keep to the right of birth, because after so big and so complete an upheaval the only sheet anchor was to build something legal on sound bases, and to unite all spirits upon one point" [2]. However deplorable the metaphor may have been, it was perfectly understood, and among the men who in the critical days of November took the direction of affairs in Holland there was no longer any question of young William VII.

[1] Colenbrander, *Inlijving en Opstand*, pp. 180 sqq., which, together with the documents of the *Gedenkstukken* and Coolemens Beynen's *Gedenkboek 1813*, is the principal source for the statements of fact contained in the remaining part of this chapter. Also *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biographisch Woordenboek*, Vol. II.

[2] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V. p. 9.

After the repression of the first half of the year 1813, the popular ferment quieted down, at least outwardly. Van Hogendorp and his friends felt that the moment for action had not yet arrived. Davoust was turning Hamburg into an immensely powerful military centre, and the French were taking good care that this should be known in Holland. But on November 5th the *Moniteur* of October 30th was received in Holland. It contained the news of Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig. People at once became more restless; there were new disorders at The Hague. But the leaders still judged that they could take no definite action. The number of visitors at Van Hogendorp's house at The Hague increased, and the host was making plans with Van Stirum and other soldiers for arming the nation. The French were not unaware of these comings and goings, but their police system was already disintegrating, and somehow no arrests were made. Nevertheless, Van Hogendorp and his friends were running serious risks. The fortune of arms had changed so often, in the course of the last few years, that a victorious return of Napoleon always remained within the range of possibility. The conspirators — for such they now at last had become — knew full well that in that case they would receive scant mercy.

Soon enough, the military situation had acquired an aspect which no amount of censorship on the part of the French could hide from the Dutch nation. General Molitor had only 9,000 men at his disposal, nearly half of whom were Dutch conscripts. Russian Cossacks were invading the north east of the country; they entered Zwolle on the 12th, Groningen on the 15th of November. Everywhere in Groningen and in Friesland they were received as liberators. They met with no resistance, because the French soldiers avoided all engagements and retreated before the arrival of the Allied vanguards. Innumerable French officials, in particular the customs officers of Napoleon's continental system, were running away from the invader. They crossed the Zuiderzee and passed through the province of Holland in their flight southwards,

increasing by their panic the joyful sense of change which was pervading the populations.

Orange cockades appeared everywhere in the towns and villages of the province of Holland, and they left no doubt to the retreating French about the feeling of their one-time *administrés*. By November 10th, Van Hogendorp was in favour of immediate revolution. But his friends felt no such haste. They calmly followed events, well aware of the amount of leverage that was required in order to obtain their end. They had no romantic ambitions, they intended to risk nothing beyond what was necessary. As one of them wrote in later years, they knew that, sooner or later, they must be freed from French domination. "No extreme sacrifices were required for this. What mattered was to manage affairs in such a way that we should not fall under the temporary administration of other foreigners, who might be inclined to settle our restoration in accordance with their own preferences and their own views rather than with ours" [1]. To step into the void that would be created by the departure of the French, before the Allies had the time to fill it, was all that seemed necessary. But a little persuasion in order to urge the French to create this vacuum as soon as possible was not deemed inadvisable. The men about Van Hogendorp found it possible to alarm the French civilians who were still at their posts by talking about the savagery of the populace in the big towns. They had maintained friendly intercourse with the French officials, warned them against the risk they might run, and recounted hair-raising stories about the cruel fate of the De Witts at the hands of the mob at The Hague in 1672.

Meanwhile, in order to avoid being cut off by the Russian advance, the French decided to concentrate their troops near Utrecht. During the night from November 14th to 15th the French garrison left Amsterdam. Immediately the mob, under the pretext that they wanted to destroy the houses of the French, prepared to pillage private property in a wholesale manner. A popular Orangist,

[1] A. R. Falck, *Gedenkschriften*, p. 76.

Job May, placed himself at the head of the movement. He was the grandson of an Englishman, and had been a captain in the Dutch navy. He belonged to the Hogendorp group, and certainly did not approve of mob rule. All he wanted was to create a diversion, and with this end in view he incited the populace to set fire to the little customs houses, which were the symbol of one of the most hated aspects of French oppression. The civic guard, recruited among the better class of citizens, attempted no interference except in the prevention of excesses. Influenced by the whispers of Van Hogendorp's adherents, the French Governor Lebrun, judging his safety endangered, left Amsterdam on November 16th, but not before he had entrusted a council, consisting of important citizens of the town, with the executive power in the name of the Emperor of the French. Satisfied that they had legality on their side, these *patres conscripti* of Amsterdam assumed the direction of affairs, and the second city of the French Empire proceeded no further along the road of revolution.

The town council missed no single opportunity to emphasise the fact that they were not a political body, but only guardians of the public order, and the uninterrupted flow of deputations which they sent to Molitor continued to proclaim their loyalty to the French Empire. One man was straining under this timorous neutrality. This was Anton Reinhard Falck, an able young man who had been secretary of the Batavian legation at Madrid in the days when Schimmelpenninck was pensionary, and a civil servant under King Louis Napoleon. He had resigned soon after the annexation, and had joined Van Hogendorp's informal conspiracy, although in order to allay suspicion he had avoided all personal contact with the leader. Falck, who was a captain in the civic guards, decided on a pronunciamento on his own authority. His men had already fallen in before the town hall when the first Cossacks arrived. No violence was necessary, and French rule had ended in Amsterdam (November 24th, 1813).

Meanwhile Rotterdam, cowed by the proximity of a

French garrison at Gorcum, remained quiet. But The Hague had taken bolder a step on the road to freedom. Here the French had still left a garrison after their movement of concentration upon Utrecht. It consisted of four hundred men, mostly conscripts from Prussia, under General Bouvier des Eclats. Van Hogendorp decided not to wait for their departure. When, on the morning of November 17th, the news arrived, in a rather exaggerated form, of the rising in Amsterdam, he judged that the moment for striking a blow had arrived. He issued a proclamation to the people, announcing that Holland was free, that a government was being formed, composed of persons of importance without distinction of political opinion, which would proclaim the Prince of Orange as supreme authority [1]. With orange cockades in their hats, Van Hogendorp and his friends showed themselves to the enthusiastic populace, and the Orange flag was hoisted from the steeples, while the garrison were barricading themselves with their two pieces of cannon in the centre of the old town. The civic guard joined the movement, formed themselves into an Orange Guard, and overawed the garrison by shouting commands and firing their muskets all through the night. The next morning (November 18th) General Bouvier des Eclats left the town at the head of his troops, conducted by officers of the Orange Guard. Half of his Prussians deserted in the course of the same day, and joined the Dutch cause. The Hague was free, unless there should be an offensive return of the French, which still remained possible.

The people of The Hague, however, scarcely knew what to do with their new-found freedom. Van Hogendorp's

[1] This is the translation of the proclamation: "*Oranje boven*! Holland is free. The Allies are advancing towards Utrecht. The English are being called. The French are fleeing in every direction. The sea is open. Trade is reviving. All partisanship has ceased. All past suffering is forgotten and forgiven. All men of consequence are joining the government. The government is proclaiming the Prince as supreme authority. We are joining the Allies and compelling the enemy to make peace. The people will be given a day of rejoicing at the public expense, but there will be neither looting nor ill-treatment. Everyone thanks God. The old times are returning. *Oranje boven*!"

plan of action was clear enough. He wanted a definite break with the French Empire, a formal though provisional return to the régime which existed before the French invasion, from which a new order of affairs would be evolved by general consent and under the leadership of the Prince of Orange. But Van Hogendorp found it more difficult than he had expected to put his plan into execution. A good many among the notables whom he called to a meeting at his house on November 18th showed themselves unwilling to do anything beyond maintaining order during the absence of the French administration. Several of those present displayed the greatest enthusiasm for calling upon English assistance, and a number of important personages decided to make the journey to England themselves in order to ask for that assistance and wait on safe shores till the French were further away from The Hague.

The meeting was adjourned till November 20th, when even more reserve was shown than on the 18th. It became clear to Van Hogendorp that he would not obtain the cooperation he required for holding a meeting of the old States General of 1795, which would have established a legitimate authority in the heart of the country before the arrival of the liberating invaders. Where the way of legitimacy and tradition proved to be barred, Van Hogendorp decided upon bolder action. He formed a provisional administration, a duumvirate composed of himself and Van der Duyn van Maasdam, and called upon all good Dutchmen to support this administration in a proclamation which was issued on the following day, November 21st. A further proclamation issued on the 21st. relieved all officials from their oath of allegiance to Napoleon. At the same time the provisional government was solemnly established.

The liberation of the country did not take place everywhere in the same peaceful manner. Woerden, which had joined the national movement, was re-occupied by the French, who committed grave excesses in the course of which a considerable number of citizens lost their lives.

Enthusiasm at The Hague waned when news of the events at Woerden was received. Van Hogendorp did not find it easy to re-assure his fellow citizens. He paraded through the streets the English merchant Grant who had arrived from England at Scheveningen on November 23rd. Grant donned his English volunteer's uniform and appeared as the harbinger of English military assistance. Precisely at that moment assistance arrived. On the morning of the 24th, as we have already seen, the first Cossacks entered Amsterdam. They were only a squadron of two hundred men, commanded by Major Marklay. On the following day the provisional government found it possible to appoint a governor of Amsterdam. At the same time Bülow was advancing through Gelderland, and on the 28th Molitor evacuated Utrecht.

We have now reached a turning point in the history of Holland. When, on November 20th, 1813, Gijsbrecht Karel van Hogendorp formed a provisional government, sharing power, responsibility, and risk only with his friend Van der Duyn van Maasdam, he established the new central authority which has continued uninterrupted until the present day. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance and the significance of this action. From the moment it was taken, all the efforts which English diplomacy was making to obtain the recognition of Holland's independence as one of the main aims of the war became superfluous. Holland had now resumed her existence as a sovereign state, however embryonic it might still be from the territorial point of view. Neither was this event the result of the popular movement upon which the British Government, and in particular its Secretary of State for War, had counted. It was due, as much as any event can ever be due to one single human factor, to the courage and presence of mind of Van Hogendorp. But if England's diplomacy, and her preparations for giving support to a popular rising, both proved unnecessary, they must not be considered as having been sheer waste of effort. These exertions had given to the problem of the Netherlands a momentum it was not to lose during the two

eventful years which followed. In the eyes of the European coalition, England had established herself as the particular champion of the Netherlands and of the House of Orange. Concessions were made to the House of Orange, and to the country which had entrusted its government to the head of that House, that would probably have been out of the question but for the interest taken by England in the affairs of the Netherlands. From November 20th, 1813, however, there is no further question of the part played by England in the liberation of Holland. This liberation had become a fact, and we must now, in a new chapter, examine the relations between England and the restored state of Holland during the first months of its existence.

CHAPTER II

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE CLIENT STATE DURING THE FIRST MONTHS OF ITS EXISTENCE

A. Did Holland liberate Herself?
B. Liberated Holland looks to Britain for Assistance and calls William VI
C. William VI becomes Sovereign Prince of the Netherlands. The Attitude of the Powers
D. The Situation in the Liberated Country
E. Great Britain and the Military Effort of Holland
F. Great Britain and the Internal Affairs of the New Dutch State
G. The Parliamentary Opposition in England and the New Régime in the Netherlands
H. Great Britain and the Foreign Relations of the Dutch State
I. Trade Relations between Great Britain and Liberated Holland

A. — *Did Holland liberate Herself?*

The proclamation of a provisional government by Van Hogendorp at once placed Holland in the rank of sovereign states. As a result, it escaped the fate of the Southern half of the Netherlands, which was wrenched from the French by the Allied armies, and treated as conquered territory to be disposed of by the conquerors without regard to the wishes of the inhabitants. In how far did the manner in which the Northern and the Southern Netherlands were delivered from the French really differ? This is by no means a question of purely academic interest. Long before the event, Van Hogendorp had realised how different might be the fate of a country which, of its own free will, took its place among Napoleon's enemies, from that of a country which received its freedom at the hands of the Allies. The leaders of British foreign policy had no

less decided views about this distinction. To Repelaer, a Dutchman who arrived in England at the time of Van Hogendorp's coup, Castlereagh said that if the Allies had been under the necessity of re-conquering Holland, its fate would have been uncertain. But having risen of its own volition, Holland could now count upon every assistance [1]. Only a short time previously, Bathurst, despairing of the chances of a revolution among the Dutch, had written to Wellington: if they "do not soon take up arms for themselves, the Allies will enter as into an enemy's country, and treat them as a conquered one" [2].

Now, although it is obvious that Holland was not treated as a conquered territory, it is by no means equally certain that Holland really did liberate herself. In the *Historische Zeitschrift* of 1886 a debate took place on this question between Von Sybel, the Editor, and the Dutch professor P. L. Muller. Von Sybel argued that Holland had been freed by the victories of the Allies, and in particular by the Prussian army. The Dutch professor maintained that Holland had been herself the author of her liberation. A greater distance from the events has made it possible for Colenbrander to summarise the dispute in his *Gedenkstukken* with more detachment. "I believe", he writes, "that neither we nor the Prussians effected the liberation, but that the French settled the question by running away. That they did run away was the result of European events, in which we played none but a passive part, while the Prussians, from March 1813, at any rate, played a very active one. But when our real conquerors took to flight, we just had enough presence of mind, thanks to Van Hogendorp, to take their place without delay. Von Sybel thinks this wise, and so do we" [3].

But in 1813 and 1814 no one thought of debating the question which, some seventy years later, agitated the contributors of the *Historische Zeitschrift*. The idea of a self-liberated Holland was alive and active, quite apart

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 41.
[2] Nov. 10th, 1813. *Ged.* VI, p. 1956.
[3] Vol. VI, Introd. p. ccxi-ccxii.

from any foundation it had in reality. It was not the actual mode of Holland's escape from French domination, but the universally accepted opinion of contemporaries about the manner in which this liberation occurred that became a powerful factor in the calculations of diplomacy [1].

The Dutch themselves were not slow in turning to good use the impression made by Van Hogendorp's energy. In Amsterdam, the General Commissioners of the Provisional Government demanded from the Russian commander that in dealing with Amsterdam and the surrounding country he should take into account that those territories had their own government before he occupied them, and that the inhabitants should be considered as allies. The Russian commander expressed his complete agreement with these views and acted accordingly. In practice, it was not only in the parts of Holland which the Allies had not yet reached at the time of Van Hogendorp's coup, but in the large tracts which they already occupued at that moment that the friendly treatment was applied. The fact that before the French domination Holland had been a sovereign state for centuries naturally counted, and once the province of Holland proper was admitted to the rank of a self-liberated country, the whole territory of the Northern Netherlands had automatically to be treated in the same way.

When Sir Charles Stewart, the British Ambassador to Prussia, heard the news from Holland, he realised that the Dutch question had entered upon a new phase.

[1] "The Dutch", said the Swedish Crown Prince to the Dutch notable Van der Hoeven, who visited him at his headquarters on December 1st, 1813, "have done more than other nations. For they did not wait till the allied armies had arrived in the heart of their country before they shook off the yoke. Your nation has unanimously declared in favour of its ancient sovereign. This is very lucky, for if it had not followed that impulse, we should have had to push it that way" (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* IV, p. 295). Bernadotte is mistaken, of course, when he calls the Prince of Orange the ancient Sovereign of Holland. Bülow, writing to the Prince of Orange on December 2nd, promised his assistance to the Prince and to his nation "which freed itself in an honourable way" (*Ged.* VI, p. 1989).

Discussing the Frankfort Proposals in the course of an important conversation with Hardenberg, Stewart did not consider it necessary even to touch upon the subject of Holland. He trusted "that the happy intelligence from thence" would "completely put that question on its legs" [1]. Castlereagh himself was drawing the same conclusion. Writing to Aberdeen on November 30th he said: "the form of government of that State can no longer be a matter of negotiation between the Allied Powers and France. His Royal Highness feels confident, after the glorious and successful effort recently made by the people of that country to assert their independence under the Government of the House of Orange, that there will be but one sentiment amongst the Allies as to the support they shall receive" [2].

The most clear-sighted contemporary comment on the whole situation comes from that level-headed pragmatist and devoted friend of the Dutch cause, Lord Malmesbury. "Holland", he wrote "will have the merit, at least in appearance, of having contributed almost by herself to her restoration and liberation. This is a very valuable consideration" [3].

B. — *Liberated Holland looks to Britain for Assistance and calls William VI*

Liberated Holland immediately took two steps of the highest international importance. It called upon the Prince of Orange to place himself at the head of the state, and it made a virtual declaration of alliance with England. "We shall bind ourselves to England by indissoluble ties, we shall be hers altogether", wrote Van Hogendorp on November 28th to Fagel in a letter which was also

[1] Stewart to Castlereagh, Nov. 28th 1813. Webster, *Br. Dipl.* p. 91.
[2] Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 115. Several months later Clancarty, the British Ambassador to Holland, brought as an argument against Russia's financial demands from Holland the fact that "the immediate freedom of this state is.... to be attributed to the spirit of its own inhabitants". (*Ged.* VII, p. 70).
[3] To H. Fagel, Jan. 7th, 1814. (*Ged.* VII, p. 23).

meant for the eyes of the British Cabinet [1]. The messages and appeals which were sent oversea during the next few days were destined as much for the British Government as for the Prince of Orange. Especially after definite information had reached the new government as to the whereabouts of William VI, Britain appeared to it as the place whence guidance, assistance, and international sanction for the revolution were to come.

We have seen that on November 17th Van Hogendorp published a proclamation announcing that Holland was free, and that a government, composed of all important persons in the country, had declared the Prince of Orange to be the supreme authority. At the same time, he despatched fishing boats to Texel, to Goeree, and across the North Sea, to announce the revolution to any English war vessel they might meet [2]. The same day, Van Hogendorp wrote a letter to Henry Fagel, whom he knew to be in London. In this letter he announced the revolt of Amsterdam, an event to which, at the time of writing, he attached infinitely more importance than it deserved. He further told Fagel that the whole nation called for the presence of William VI of Orange, and that on the following day a meeting was to be held at his own house, where a Provisional Government which would act until the arrival of the Prince was to be established. Van Hogendorp ended by expressing the opinion that England ought to send ships, munitions, arms, and troops, as well as an Ambassador, to Holland.

The next day, the 18th, Van Hogendorp obtained to this letter the signatures of the members of the committee that had gathered at his house. But, as we saw in the previous chapter, many of these notables did not display the same determination as Van Hogendorp, and some of them departed for England on the self-imposed mission of asking for English support. The message delivered by one of these travellers on arriving in England was not

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* IV, p. 269.
[2] For a detailed account of the November days in Holland, cf. Colenbrander *Inlijving en Opstand*, pp. 236 sqq.

calculated to inspire confidence in the new government of Holland. This man, Repelaer van Driel, told a very depressing story to Major General Herbert Taylor, whom he met on landing at Harwich. The new government, said Repelaer, had not made much progress in arming or organising the population. The insurrection had been premature, the leaders differed in their opinions and in their views of the measures which should be taken: nor were their councils free from jealousy. Happily, on the same day, there also landed Job May, the former captain of the Dutch navy who had played a moderating part during the Amsterdam riots, and who was able to tell a more satisfactory story to General Taylor. May spoke of the good exertions which were being made at Rotterdam, The Hague and Amsterdam, and which would have been more fruitful had there been no lack of arms[1].

The British Government had, by this time, obtained information of a more official, if not yet altogether reliable, nature, than that provided by notables who were afraid to stand by Van Hogendorp. In the evening of November 19th, James Fagel, a brother of Henry, and another notable, de Perponcher, went to England with Van Hogendorp's letter to Henry Fagel dated November 17th, and with a copy of his proclamation of that same date[2]. On November 20th they landed at Yarmouth. Their news it was that the semaphoric telegraph transmitted to Castlereagh who immediately communicated it to the Prince of Orange. The messengers reached Londen the next morning and handed the letter and proclamation to Henry Fagel. They had now a double task to perform: to invite William VI to Holland, and to enlist the active support of England.

[1] *Bathurst Papers*, pp. 240—2. For the frame of mind of Repelaer at the time of his precipitous departure for England, see *Ged.* VI, pp. 1742-3.

[2] *Ged.* VI, pp. CCXVII—IX of introduction to third part. There are some uncertainties as to the precise moment of departure of these two messengers, and also as to whether or not they carried a letter to the Prince of Orange himself. Colenbrander examines the various opinions that have been expressed on these points, and we may accept his conclusions.

William VI received the Dutch messengers on the day of their arrival, while Henry Fagel set himself to reply to the letter they carried. He wrote that immediately on his arrival in Holland the Prince ought to be proclaimed as Sovereign (a striking departure, as no Prince of Orange had ever been a sovereign of Holland), and that it was to be hoped that his style would be William I, and not William VI[1]. The Prince himself wrote to Van Hogendorp on the following day announcing that he would arrive as soon as possible, and that he entirely approved of the measures which had been taken in Holland[2]. Fagel's letter, which had certainly been written in consultation with William VI, revealed the Prince's real mind. The Prince felt sure, after the assurances given by Castlereagh, that England would approve his assumption of the title of Sovereign. But he also knew that his position would be strengthened very considerably if the Dutch nation were to confer this title upon him without any prompting.

At the same time as they approached the Prince, the Dutch messengers also informed the British Government of what had happened. Their story would not have stood the test of historical criticism. But can one blame them if they presented the situation with a little addition of the rosy hue which poor Repelaer's message so sadly lacked? Apart from Van Hogendorp and a diminutive group of men like Van Limburg-Stirum and Falck, the Dutch of 1813 displayed little grandeur. Was not optimism the next best thing? In any case, optimism provided the better chance of the messengers' requests being granted. They sent a note to Castlereagh asking for an immediate supply of arms and ammunition, some war vessels, some troops, and some money[3]. The agent Gevers arrived from Holland on November 21st, and was able to confirm the impression created by the report of the two commissioners. The British Government immediately started to take

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* IV, pp. 264—5.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 266.

[3] *Ged.* VI, p. 1973.

the requisite measures for the assistance of Holland, and the double purpose of the mission of J. Fagel and de Perponcher was thus achieved. Major General Taylor was appointed to a position which might be described as Military Agent in Holland. Not many troops were available for immediate despatch. The four transports with 20,000 stand of arms that had been collected for use in Holland since October were directed towards Harwich, whence they were to sail under the convoy of the frigate *Jason*. They only arrived in Holland on December 2nd, owing to delays at the Admiralty and to adverse winds. The war vessels that were stationed near the English coast were ordered on November 22nd to proceed to Holland, the objective of one part being Texel, of the other the coast of Zeeland. On the 23rd, however, it was learned that, contrary to the news brought by Fagel and de Perponcher, the fleet at Texel had not revolted against the French. The ships that had been destined for Texel were thereupon ordered to take a more southerly course and to make for the mouths of the Maas. On November 28th some of these ships appeared before Scheveningen, and the next day 250 marines disembarked from them. Another 500 followed on December 2nd, and the first troops of the regular army, a little more than 1500 Guards under the command of General Cooke, landed on December 6th [1].

C. — *William VI becomes Sovereign Prince of the Netherlands. The Attitude of the Powers.*

Prince William VI used the last few days of his sojourn in London in interviewing the Regent, Castlereagh, and his friends. An unfavourable wind delayed his departure. On November 26th he embarked, together with Clancarty, who accompanied him as British Ambassador, on the frigate *The Warrior*, which arrived off Scheveningen on the 30th. He landed in the afternoon, and was given a delirious welcome. On the day of his arrival the Prince visited Van Hogendorp, who was kept in his room by the

[1] Colenbrander, *Inlijving en Opstand*, pp. 265–8. *Ged.* VI, p. 1983.

gout, and handed him a proclamation which he had prepared before leaving London. He found the nucleus of a governmental organisation already functioning. The first question that arose was that of the manner in which he was to take over the authority held by the provisional government.

It must be remembered that legally the position of the Prince was completely indeterminate. Van Hogendorp's plan for a fictitious return to the situation of 1795, from which the new order was to evolve in rapid but orderly stages, failed owing to the hesitation displayed by the principal representatives of the old governing class. Instead, authority now rested with a provisional government which had no juridical existence. How was the transition to some form of monarchy to take place? In the proclamation which he brought with him the the Prince had avoided the subject. He was very uncertain as to the title which he ought to adopt, and this for various reasons. To assume the sovereignty was a bold step from which all his ancestors had shrunk. For ancient and established rights, it substituted an assertion which had no roots in the past. William VI, who was moreover very attached to his title of Prince of Orange, was not certain how the old Patriots Party and the Allied Powers of the Continent would receive his assumption of sovereignty [1].

Among the Dutch no such doubts existed. "The Prince is sovereign", Van Hogendorp had written even before his arrival, "one does not know how, but everybody considers him as such" [2]. On December 1st, Van der Duyn told Clancarty that the general sentiment of the country was in favour of having the Prince proclaimed Sovereign of the United Provinces [3]. But he added that "it was everybody's wish to do nothing but what should be agreeable to the views of the British Government, to which they owed so much". He asked Clancarty in how far the

[1] Colenbrander, *Ontstaan der Grondwet*, Vol. I, pp. XXXIX sqq.
[2] Van Hogendorp to Fagel, Nov. 28th, 1813. Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* IV, p. 296.
[3] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Dec. 1st, 1813. Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, I, p. 24.

execution of the designs of the Dutch would agree with the dispositions of the British Government. Clancarty replied that he had no instructions to interfere in any respect in the organisation of the Dutch government. He added as his private opinion that the happiness, the independence, and the security of the Dutch people would be best served by strengthening the executive government in the hands of the Prince. Castlereagh himself had spoken in the same sense, in an interview which he gave to Repelaer (who was still in London recuperating from his alarms) and to Henry Fagel. The British Government, Castlereagh told them, had no desire to influence the deliberations of the Dutch about the form to be given to the new government. But he recommended them to strengthen as much as possible the executive power, which the whole nation seemed to be disposed to entrust in its integrity to the Prince of Orange. The title to be given to the Prince would have to be determined in Holland, and Castlereagh assured his visitors that England would be ready to recognise whatever title the nation might adopt [1]. Fagel did not miss the hint conveyed in these last words. In the letter which reported this conversation to Van Hogendorp he said the latter would no doubt feel the necessity of submitting all the measures which might be taken in the first moment of popular fervour to the grave and solemn deliberation of an assembly of notables. Internal stability was an important part of England's programme in the Netherlands, and Castlereagh was not indifferent to the degree of solidity on which the eventual sovereignty of the Prince of Orange would rest [2].

Clancarty interfered only in one respect. When he found that the leaders who welcomed the Prince on his arrival favoured the immediate proclamation of the Prince as sovereign at The Hague, he urged that it would be unwise to take such a step without first

[1] On Nov. 30th, Castlereagh wrote to Clancarty: "You may assure the Prince of Orange that we shall recognise him with pleasure under whatever title he may think fit to assume". *Ged.* VII, p. 2.

[2] H. Fagel, to Van Hogendorp, Nov. 29th, 1813. Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, I, pp. 22—23.

communicating with the important town of Amsterdam. Britain still remembered the strength of the opposition to the House of Orange which had so often been displayed by Amsterdam before the French occupation. The Prince had no objection to this arrangement. There was one point only about which he felt strongly. He did not wish to assume or to be given the royal title until the country had received a territorial extension which made it "a Kindom of some consequence" [1].

The proclamation of William I as Sovereign Prince took place in Amsterdam on December 2nd. amidst great enthusiasm [2]. The populace of Amsterdam was Orangist by tradition, and the bourgeoisie, about whose disposition Britain and the Prince had felt some doubts up to the last moment, was ready for a whole-hearted acceptance of the new régime. Everybody wanted a single legislative and executive power; nobody wanted to return to the chaos which had existed under the extreme federalism of the old régime [3]. It was generally felt that only a monarchial form of government could prevent new divisions. Where Amsterdam gave so clear a lead, no doubt could exist about the country in general. From this moment the change of the title of Sovereign Prince to that of King became a question of secondary importance. The door was opened wide for this change, and the intentions of the Prince were publicly avowed by his assumption of the appellation of Royal Highness. The territorial ambitions of the new Sovereign were made equally patent by the form chosen to designate his country. In letters addressed

[1] The Prince to Bentinck van Buckhorst, who was at the head of the provisional administration at Zwolle, Dec. 7th, 1813. *Ged.* VIII p. 366. Cf. also Falck *Gedenkschriften*, p. 115.

[2] It is interesting to note that at this late stage there still existed some doubts as to the identity of the Prince of Orange who was being proclaimed sovereign. Van Hogendorp reports in his *Brieven en Gedenkschriften*, V, p. 44 that while the people of Amsterdam were waiting before the *Stadhuis* for the arrival of the Prince, they were discussing whether it was William VI or William VII who was coming. A few days earlier, a private letter from Friesland had mentioned a similar uncertainty in that province. *Ged.* VI, p. 1765.

[3] The Sovereign Prince to his mother, Dec. 3rd, 1813. *Ged.* VI, p. 1990.

on December 3rd to the Prince Regent and to the three Allied sovereigns, the Prince adopted the title "Son Altesse Royale le Prince d'Orange-Nassau, Prince Souverain des Provinces Unies des Pays Bas [1]".

The recognition of William I in his new capacity by England came as promptly and as unreservedly as had been promised. Clancarty, who had accompanied the Prince of Orange as the representative of the British Government, was appointed His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, by a letter from the Prince Regent to the Sovereign Prince, dated December 8th [2]. At the same time Clancarty was instructed to inform the Prince that the Regent was giving the example to the sovereigns of Europe by an acknowledgment of the rank and authority which the House of Orange amply merited by its long and distinguished career [3]. Henry Fagel, who on the same day was officially appointed Ambassador in London, wrote to the Prince that from the credentials sent to Clancarty he would see that the British Government had hastened to recognise him in his new capacity [4].

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 358. Provinces Unies was the official title of the Northern Netherlands before the French invasion; Pays Bas comprised the Southern Netherlands as well. Puzzled or embarrassed by the various connotations of the word "Netherlands", Clancarty, on writing to Castlereagh about the form in which the Prince desired his credentials to be drawn out, translated the name of the country to whose Sovereign he was accredited as "The United Provinces of the Low Countries" (*Ged.* VII, pp. 6–7). The choice of this geographical term did not escape the attention of the British public. *The Courier* (quoted in Cobbett's *Political Register*, Dec. 11th, 1813) wrote: "Is it meant that all the Netherlands, Austrian as well as Dutch, should be annexed to the United Provinces? Would such an arrangement be agreeable to Austria?"

[2] In a circular letter to British diplomatic representatives at the Allied courts dated Nov. 29th, it was announced that Clancarty had "been appointed to reside at The Hague as His Majesty's Ambassador". — *F. O. Austria*, 101.

[3] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 446. England did more than give an example. On December 25th Cathcart reports from Freiburg i.B. that he had spoken to the Russian Emperor about the desirability of his sending a mission to The Hague. The Emperor replied that he intended to send a person known to the Prince of Orange as soon as possible. — *F. O. Russia*, 243. [4] *Ged.* VII, p. 385.

The first to follow the example of England was Louis of Bourbon, the future King of France, who on December 8th accredited the Chevalier de la Sèvre as political agent to the Sovereign Prince [1]. Official recognition by the Powers followed soon, although the actual appointment of diplomatic representatives took more time. On January 20th Russia appointed General Phull as Ambassador to the Prince, in February Provost was sent as Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, and in March Brockhausen became Prussian Ambassador. None of these diplomatic representatives had, in the course of the first months of Dutch independence, the influence which immediately fell to Clancarty, and which struck every onlooker from the outset [2].

That the link between England and the new state was very intimate was a fact recognised by all the Powers, and it was accepted by the Dutch themselves. On January 1st, 1814 Castlereagh, who had long realised that he could not sufficiently influence the negotiations which were taking place on the Continent while he remained in London, and whose hands had been freed by the parliamentary recess, started on his important journey to Allied Headquarters. It is characteristic that one of the points mentioned in the instructions of the Cabinet for Castlereagh (instructions drawn up by Castlereagh himself) was that the Allies were to be informed of the intended marriage between the Hereditary Prince of Orange and Princess Charlotte, the daughter of the Regent. We shall return to this question in the next chapter; the only point which matters at present is that this announcement was meant as a gesture of solidarity between England and the House of Orange, which would establish quite clearly that every service rendered to Orange would be considered

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V.

[2] The Russian General Benckendorf, who was in Amsterdam on Dec. 2nd when the Prince of Orange was proclaimed Sovereign, and saw him there accompanied by Clancarty, wrote to Nesselrode on the following day: "D'après tout ce que j'ai pu remarquer, le ministre anglais mène entièrement la barque, et le Prince le traite en mentor" (*Ged.* VII, p. XXXI).

by Great Britain as a service rendered to herself. This special relationship made itself felt immediately by the confidential attitude adopted at Headquarters by Lord Aberdeen towards von Gagern who was the representative of the Sovereign Prince of Orange in his capacity of German Prince [1].

The Prince, in his capacity of Sovereign of the Netherlands, now sent another representative to Headquarters. This was Spaen van Voorstonde, who was however not admitted to the private gatherings of the Allied diplomats. But von Gagern had the happy inspiration of arranging for the Prussian Ambassador von Humboldt to be accredited for the Prince of Orange in his capacity of Prince of Nassau, so that the interests of the Prince were after all also defended in the intimate conclaves of the Allies [2]. But this arrangement by no means enabled Dutch diplomacy to adopt an independent attitude at Allied Headquarters [3].

D. — *The Situation in the Liberated Country*

Before we proceed further to examine the relationship between Great Britain and the Netherlands, we must say a few words about the situation of the latter country. The name "The Netherlands" as yet was only part of a programme. Until the union of the Northern and Southern Netherlands in 1815 it no more answered to reality than

[1] Aberdeen showed von Gagern the communication which he had received from Castlereagh concerning the affairs of Holland (von Gagern to the Sovereign Prince, Dec. 8th, 1813, in *Ged.* VII, pp. 371—3). This communication from Castlereagh to Aberdeen, of Nov. 7th, in Webster, *Br. Dipl.* p. 118.

[2] This is the interpretation of Van Hogendorp. *Br. en Ged.* V, pp. 50—1.

[3] When von Brockhausen was appointed Prussian Ambassador at the Dutch court, he drew up a kind of programme which, before starting on his mission, he submitted to Hardenberg on March 19th, 1814. The seventh point in the programme was: "To establish a perfect understanding with the British mission in Holland. For that country is the link which must join the interests of England and of Prussia, and it is necessary that this understanding should be established in an evident manner" (*Ged.* VII, p. 294).

it did after the Southern half seceded in 1830 [1]. The country governed by the Sovereign Prince of the Netherlands after his arrival in December 1813 was only a part of what we have agreed to call Holland. The French were still in possession of many fortresses, the Helder, Delfzijl, Coevorden, Deventer, Naarden, Gorkum, and of most of the territories south of the big rivers, when the Prince landed at Scheveningen.

When the Prince formally took over the administration from the Provisional Government on December 6th, he found an organisation which was already hard at work in the liberated parts of the country. There were several ministers, who were named Commissioners General, one for finance, one for home affairs, one for war, and one for police. There was a chamber of accounts, and the judicial organisation of the French Empire had been preserved *in toto*. The Sovereign Prince appointed some further ministers, the most important appointment being that of Van Hogendorp as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on December 6th [2]. A new constitution had to be given to the country: this question was dealt with without loss of time. On December 4th Van Hogendorp handed to the Prince the draft of the fundamental law which he had prepared in 1812. This document was studied by the Prince and by some other persons whose advice he immediately sought, while preparations were made for the appointment of a commission that should establish a text which could be submitted for approval to the notables. The

[1] After the secession of Belgium the northern half of the Netherlands maintained and has preserved to the present day the official appellation of "Kingdom of the Netherlands". To this geographic designation the Northern Kingdom has no historic claim.

[2] Van Hogendorp was the only minister who immediately received the title of "Secretary of State". This title was not applied to the other ministers until the fundamental law of 1814 came into force. In December 1813 Van Hogendorp was suffering from the gout, and his function of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was temporarily performed by Van der Duyn. In January Van Hogendorp took up his office, and remained at the Department of Foreign Affairs until April 6th, 1814, when he was appointed minister without portfolio and Vice-President of the Council of State. His successor at the Department of Foreign Affairs was Van Nagell (*Ged.* VII, p. XIII).

commission was appointed on December 21st, and its fourteen members started their labours on December 27th. Van Hogendorp was made the chairman, and his draft constitution was taken as basis for the deliberations. In March 1814 the new constitution was presented to the Prince, on the 29th of that month it was submitted to an assembly of notables in Amsterdam, who accepted it by an immense majority, and on the next day the Sovereign Prince took the oath to the constitution.

During the period of transition which preceded the introduction of the constitution the country was governed by a council of ministers of which the Prince was Chairman and Van Hogendorp Vice-Chairman. From the beginning, however, the Prince applied the autocratic methods which he had learned during his administration of the diminutive principality of Fulda. Napoleon, whom he saw as the omniscient and supremely efficient administrator, was his model. This is why he discountenanced any attempt at cabinet government as it existed in England. He allowed no minister to discuss with him matters that did not concern his own department. It was soon said, and with much justice, that his ministers were nothing but clerks. By the time the Council of State, established by virtue of the new constitution, began to function, the ministerial council had lost all importance.

Meanwhile, the relations between the Prince and Van Hogendorp, which had from the beginning been somewhat lacking in cordiality, were becoming rather strained. Van Hogendorp had rendered incalculable services to the country and to the House of Orange. The gesture which resulted in Holland's being allowed to take rank among the sovereign states was made by Van Hogendorp, and on his own initiative. Moreover, it was he who settled, and not only as far as the Dutch were concerned, the question whether it was the father or the son to whom the sovereignty should be offered. But if the Sovereign Prince was thus greatly in Van Hogendorp's debt, no one was better aware of this than Van Hogendorp, who, with his stern

and rather humourless outlook on life, and a temper embittered by years of disappointment, could not bear that the Prince took so many services for granted without showing by his attitude and by his actions that he was fully appreciative of his minister's great merits. Van Hogendorp had dreamt of himself as the second man in the country, as a kind of chancellor and factotum of a constitutional king. It was for that reason that he had provided in his draft constitution for the creation of a grand pensionary; but this proposal had not survived the discussion of the commission. The Prince was the last man to dispossess himself of so much power at the hands even of the most faithful servant. He was also too cool and too reserved to show affection or gratitude, supposing that he was animated by either of these sentiments towards Van Hogendorp. Having hoped to enter Holland at the head of his own liberating army, he probably felt disinclined to be reminded of his more modest entry, carried from the long boat of an English man-of-war on the back of a Scheveningen fisherman. Expressions of gratitude belonged to the past, as much as petitions, whether to Napoleon, to the Russian Emperor, or to the British Foreign Secretary. Van Hogendorp had been a giver, William the recipient of his gift — truly, the wrong relationship between Sovereign and subject.

The liberation of the country was naturally the first important task of the Prince's government. We have seen that at the time of the Prince's arrival a portion of the national territory was still occupied by the French. There is no need, in this survey of diplomatic events, to enter into the details of military history. In the operations of the Allied armies, as they developed between the beginning of December 1813 and the capitulation of Paris, the clearing of the soil of Holland was a minor consideration which at no time interfered with the general plan of campaign [1]. The operations of Allied troops in Holland were of a minor order. A few sotnias of Cossacks under

[1] Henry Houssaye, *passim*. Koolemans Beijnen, *Gedenkboek*, *passim*.

Benckendorf, a Prussian corps under Bülow, and eight thousand English troops under Sir Thomas Graham were all that could be spared for the liberation of Dutch territory. About the middle of December Bülow threw Molitor across the River Maas, and placed himself in the way of the eight thousand men who had been sent northward by Napoleon to re-conquer Holland. During the operations of the spring of 1814, the Russians and the Prussians were gradually drawn southward, and even Graham gave more attention to Antwerp and the Southern Netherlands, although they left behind them several strong places that were still occupied by the French. It was the opinion of the Allied Military Authorities that the Dutch should be able to invest those places themselves, and even to form an army from which some contingents might eventually be sent southward to take part in the fight against Napoleon's main forces.

E. — *Great Britain and the Military Effort of Holland*

In the course of December serious efforts had been made to organise the military resources of liberated Holland. On December 20th a general call was made to the manhood of the nation for the formation of a *landstorm* of all men between 17 and 50 years of age who were capable of bearing arms. From among these a land militia was to be chosen by ballot. On December 19th the Hereditary Prince [1] had arrived from Spain, and a few days later he was appointed General of Infantry, inspector of all arms and of the land militia. The plan was to raise 55,000 men, 20,000 of whom would form the land militia. For armaments and even for clothing and equipment the new army had to rely entirely on Britain. Naturally, the British were showing a particular interest in the recruiting and organisation of this army which they were providing with everything it required, and in military affairs there was,

[1] Prince William VII, who can henceforth be designated by his title of Hereditary Prince without danger of confusion with his father, the Sovereign Prince.

during these first months, no attempt to disguise the dependence of the small country upon its powerful protector.

This dependence was symbolised at the outset by the fact that, when the Prince of Orange landed on November 30th, Clancarty held a warship in readiness against the eventuality of a hurried retreat [1]. It was observable, too, in the activities of the military representative, General Taylor, and in the orders of the Ambassador Clancarty. Taylor followed the details of recruiting, pointed out to Dutch officers areas where the men capable of bearing arms had not yet been sufficiently organised, and obtained, even from the Sovereign Prince, prompt action upon his hints [2]. Clancarty followed the recruiting of the army with a wary eye. Like Taylor, he pointed to territories from which, in his opinion, more men might be gathered. Once he complained to Van Hogendorp that, although there were so many young men willing to take up arms in the newly liberated parts of Zeeland, recruiting in that province showed no progress. During the first six weeks or so after the landing of the Sovereign Prince, while recruiting was fairly steady, Clancarty was shown a weekly return of the progress made. About the middle of January he ceased to receive these reports, and, as rumours were current in England at that moment that the Dutch were making no military efforts whatever [3], he repeatedly insisted on being informed. At the end of February he spoke rather strongly to the Sovereign Prince, because the British Government had made a request for information about Dutch recruiting to which the Ambassador was completely unable to reply. As a result of this conversation, a conference was held between Clancarty, Van Hogendorp, and Bentinck, the Dutch War Secretary.

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 41.

[2] Already at the end of November and during the month of December 1813 Taylor was reporting to the Secretary for War. On December 10th he announced that the Prince had signed an order for the classification and organisation of the population of Voorn, the Tieler Waard, and the Betuwe, as a result of his representations (*Bathurst Papers*, pp. 240—7).

[3] Originating with the Opposition, who wanted to make out that the Dutch did not like the new régime. *Vide infra* p. 145 sqq.

It appeared then that the Dutch had nearly 25,000 men ready for service. Clancarty expressed complete satisfaction, and said, "You are not a noisy people" [1]. A few days later Clancarty appeared still further mollified as a result of a closer examination of the recruiting returns [2]. Apart from the official supervision exercised by Clancarty and Taylor, we may also mention the benevolent interest taken by Wellington in the activities of his former staff officer, the Hereditary Prince, after his sudden promotion. In a pleasantly modest letter the Prince wrote to the British Commander about his work as chief of the Dutch army, and gave him a detailed account of the progress of recruiting [3].

There were naturally other causes of friction which resulted from the presence of British armies in Holland and from the desire of the British to obtain the utmost results from the means they were placing at the disposal of the Dutch. The British troops paid cash for everything they received, but in December there were already strong complaints about the high prices of supplies issued to the troops [4]. Later, Clancarty complained that the Dutch Government had appropriated all the coats that arrived from England, to the number of 15,000, and 14,000 out of 15,000 waistcoats, for the clothing of their militia, without consulting him. Clancarty would have wished to distribute the clothing in the first place to men on active service, and in particular to those of the brigade which was already serving with the British army under Sir Thomas Graham [5]. However, when such cases arose, the

[1] Van Hogendorp, *ut supra*. From Clancarty's report it appears that by the end of February, the Dutch had received 50,320 muskets from England.

[2] Clancarty to Castlereagh, March 5th, 1814. "....from the state in which this country was found, the embarrassment and the difficulties which hence, and from other circumstances H. R. H. the Prince of Orange and his ministers have since had to contend with, it would be unjust to say that considerable exertions have not been made for the attainment of this important subject" *Ged.* VII, pp. 76—77.

[3] Jan 18th, 1814. *Ged.* VII, p. 30.

[4] Gen. Taylor to Bathurst, Dec. 11th, 1813. *Bathurst Papers*, p. 249.

[5] *Ged.* VII, p. 76.

British could always rely on immediate compliance with their wishes.

Apart from the irritation felt by Clancarty at the supposed slow progress of Dutch recruiting, he had also been seriously annoyed, during the beginning of March, by a campaign of propaganda organised by the Dutch in the Southern Netherlands, while extraordinarily delicate and difficult negotiations were going on in England about the intended marriage between the Hereditary Prince of Orange and Charlotte, daughter of the Regent. While Castlereagh was abroad, the impulsive and somewhat erratic Bathurst was Acting Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The question of the military contribution of Holland soon led to new divergencies of views among the British ministers. We have already seen that Clancarty's cooperation with the leaders of Dutch policy was not always equally harmonious. The Sovereign Prince had told Van Hogendorp that Clancarty had spoken rather strongly to him on the subject of recruiting. On another occasion, Van Hogendorp complained to the Prince of Clancarty's "varying humour and irritable temper" [1]. On the other hand, Clancarty had found in the Prince "an unfortunate *besoin de faire*", and in Van Hogendorp, apart from the same disposition, an unpleasant tendency to trickery [2].

While Castlereagh was steeped in continental negotiations, irascible Clancarty and high-handed Bathurst

[1] March 5th, 1814. Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V., pp. 322—3.

[2] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Feb. 8th, 1814. "There is an unfortunate *besoin de faire* in H. R. H. which is to be compared to nothing I have ever seen, except the same disposition in his minister, M. de Hogendorp; added to which, the latter seems to be unfortunately impressed with the erroneous notion that trick and *ruse* form the principal qualifications of an accomplished Minister of Foreign Affairs, and that these are to be used equally towards those who are struggling to accomplish, as towards those who are endeavouring to counterwork, the object they may have in view". (*Ged.* VII, p. 52) A few days later, however, some difficulties having been talked away in the course of an interview, Clancarty came to the conclusion that the Prince "at the bottom is a very amiable person" (*Ibid*, p. 56). Clancarty's harsh opinion of Van Hogendorp, one of the most high minded men of his period, softened considerably within the next few months.

concocted a little plan for bringing the unruly client to heel. The Allies had decided in the early days of March to ask the Crown Prince of Sweden to attack Antwerp, which was still in the hands of the French. On learning this, Bathurst wrote to Clancarty that it would be necessary for the Dutch to participate in this attack with at least 10,000 men. Bathurst's despatch, dated March 15th, was accompanied by a private letter in which he spoke of means of pressure to be exercised upon Holland in order to ensure compliance with this desire. On the same day, Henry Fagel, the Dutch Ambassador, wrote from London [1] that English troops under Graham, and the corps of Walmoden, which was in English pay, were to co-operate in the attack, and that Clancarty would be instructed to require the assistance of Dutch troops. Fagel added that if his request were refused or not complied with in a zealous and energetic manner, and if as a result Antwerp at the peace remained in the hands of the French, it was firmly intended in England not to return any of the former Dutch colonies, and even not to give effect to the provisional arrangements in favour of Dutch navigation to the West Indies which had already been made. Fagel added that the principle on which such a refusal would be based was that colonial restitutions could only be made to Holland if its frontier was sufficiently strong to ensure real independence to the country. We have met this principle before in the course of the negotiations of 1813, and in the chapter on colonial restitutions we shall see the part it played in the minds of British statesmen. But in this particular case there was not merely a statement of recognised policy, but a threat which went further. The withdrawal of provisional facilities which Dutch subjects had recently obtained for trading with some of their ancient colonies belonged to an entirely different order of measures, and would have been definitely punitive. This appears clearly from Clancarty's comment to Bathurst when he found that the

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 452.

Dutch would co-operate without any pressure [1]. It was a fact that, before they were even aware of the intentions of the British Government, the Dutch had taken measures to comply with the wishes of the Allies. On March 15th Clancarty had been able to report to Castlereagh that on the previous day a very fine regiment of *Landweer* had marched from The Hague to Graham's headquarters, perfectly clothed and equipped, composed of 900 men. Two more were to follow in the course of the week, and afterwards from time to time, as they became fit [2].

It is well worth noticing that the whole idea of pressure and sanctions had originated with Bathurst, in London. Castlereagh does not appear to have had any share in it. On the contrary, the day before Bathurst communicated these views to Clancarty, Castlereagh, who was at Chaumont, had instructed the Ambassador to express to the Sovereign Prince the sense entertained by the Allied Sovereigns "of the dignified and liberal manner in which H. R. H. has been pleased to signify his readiness, in conjunction with the other powers, to place the corps of Dutch troops destined for service in the Pays Bas [3] under the command in chief of the Prince Royal of Sweden."

Thus the cloud had lifted. Van Hogendorp was able to write to his sovereign on March 22nd: "When they hear in England that the Prince of Orange has sent all those troops to General Graham before they were asked for, their humour will be still better" [4], and on the following day Clancarty reported that 20,000 Dutch troops would assemble near Breda by April 3rd, and that of these 6,924 were already available [5]. A week later, it was actually Clancarty who pointed out to Bathurst that

[1] Clancarty to Bathurst, March 23rd, 1814. "The facility with which the Prince of Orange entered into all your views made it totally unnecessary for me to make use of any of the arguments stated in your private letter, and which may therefore be reserved for some more difficult occasion". *Ged.* VII, p. 97.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 93.

[3] i.e. the Southern Netherlands, *Ged.* VII, p. 96.

[4] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 338.

[5] Clancarty to Bathurst, March 23rd, 1814. *Ged.* VII, p. 96.

Graham rather underrated the number of effective Dutch troops, and that even those which were not yet fully trained would be perfectly useful for the business of a siege [1].

The siege of Antwerp, however, never took place. Napoleon abdicated in April 6th, 1814, whereupon the French troops evacuated Antwerp, which was left in the provisional occupation of the English.

F. — *Great Britain and the Internal Affairs of the New Dutch State*

On his appointment as Prussian Ambassador to the Sovereign Prince, von Brockhausen drew up a programme of action which he submitted to the Chancellor Hardenberg [2]. It was obviously his intention to interfere in the affairs of the new state whenever he could. He proposed to prevent the weakening of the Sovereign Prince's authority, to save him from becoming involved in the struggle of domestic policy, to accelerate the organisation of the army, to insist on the application of the country's resources to the army rather than to the fleet. These and the other aims which the Prussian Ambassador wished to pursue did not really differ from what the English considered to be necessary for Holland. But the English never formulated them so sharply, and certainly they did not admit to themselves with such complete frankness that they intended to exercise any direct influence on domestic affairs. Castlereagh and Clancarty gave repeated assurances that the Dutch would be masters in their own house. We have seen in the previous section of this chapter that this abstention was at no time considered to apply to military matters. There was another matter in which the English equally considered themselves called upon to give strong advice:

[1] "And even for the subsequent operation of storming a breach, which appears to me to require more of courage than discipline, (they) might be found not altogether useless". Clancarty to Bathurst, March 29th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 99).

[2] March 19th 1814, above, p. 130.

they frequently urged the need of a strengthening of the central government. It should not be forgotten, however, that this policy had been mooted by the Prince of Orange himself, when, in his first conversation with Castlereagh immediately after his arrival in England in 1813, he asked in how far the British might consider it useful to re-establish the Stadholderly government or to substitute for it another form of government. This phrase was studiously vague, but it was dropped into understanding ears, and in his answer Castlereagh had expressed himself in favour of strengthening the central government.

Moreover, the British Government, which had the strongest reasons for wishing to keep Holland as closely allied to their interests and policy as possible, had adopted the old English system of using the House of Orange for this purpose. Hence the vigour with which they pushed the plan for a new marriage connection between the Royal House of England and the Oranges. Naturally, therefore, they not only favoured everything that would strengthen the position of the Oranges, but they also wished to see them grow in influence and popularity. As notwithstanding the Orangism of its populace, Amsterdam was by tradition a dangerous centre of opposition to the House of Orange, the British Government wanted the Sovereign Prince to do everything to conciliate this town. On December 8th, in consequence of Castlereagh's instructions, Clancarty advised the Prince to announce that he would reside for some portion of each year in Amsterdam [1]. The Prince made some difficulties, but a week later Clancarty returned to the charge, and received a more favourable reply, though he was still unable to extract from the Prince a public announcement of his intention [2]. It was only some six weeks later that the Prince, after several further requests on the part of Clancarty, and after a definite invitation by a deputation from Amsterdam, made it known that as soon as affairs

[1] Castlereagh to Clancarty, Dec. 4th, 1813 (*Ged.* VII, p. 5). Clancarty to Castlereagh, Dec. 8th, 1813 (*Ibid.*, pp. 7–8).

[2] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Dec. 14th, 1813 (*Ged.* VII, p. 9).

permitted, he would make a stay in the principal city of the country. If, in this seemingly small matter, the tenacity of the British Ambassador in urging the Prince to take a step which would contribute to his popularity, and would make him therefore a more useful and efficacious instrument, is particularly striking, the Prince's obvious determination to take the step in his own time, and the manner in which he allowed a request of his own subjects to carry more weight than the arguments of the British Ambassador are not less worthy of attention [1].

It was naturally part of Clancarty's ambassadorial duties to report on general events in the country of his residence. His choice of subject-matter shows what were the affairs that most interested him and his government. Foremost, of course, were military events and the organisation of the army. During the first part of December several despatches gave details about the reception of the Prince of Orange in the places he visited, and the manner in which he conducted himself — which in Clancarty's opinion was throughout worthy of admiration. The popular enthusiasm for the Prince was also carefully noted. The disposition of the populace continued to be followed with the greatest interest, and when, about the end of January, there was some discontent about the financial measures of the government, Clancarty hastened to report this, with the reassuring additional information that in other respects there was no diminution of the people's goodwill. Financial developments were also closely followed. Britain was interested in them, not only

[1] From the moment he landed, Clancarty was considered to be more than a mere Ambassador. When on Nov. 30th the Provisional Government proposed that the Sovereign Prince should go to Amsterdam on the next day, it was immediately felt that such an important step could not be taken without consulting Clancarty (Falck, *Gedenkschriften*, p. 115). Much later, in the beginning of April, when the Sovereign Prince was considering the advisability of informing the French garrisons which were still in Holland of the change of government in France, so that those who wished to serve the Bourbons might go back, he said to Van Hogendorp: "It is a question whether the Ambassador (i.e. Clancarty) shall be informed before we act". Van Hogendorp's advice was that Clancarty ought to be told (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, pp. 359—60).

as a creditor, but also because she particularly wished to re-establish Amsterdam in its position of money market of the world [1].

When Castlereagh visited Holland on his way to Allied Headquarters at the beginning of January 1814, he also carefully enquired into the manner in which the Dutch intended to organise their state. He conversed with Van Hogendorp about the position of the notables, the relations between executive and legislative power, etc., but abstained from giving advice or exerting any pressure. It is indeed fairly evident that, notwithstanding the two or three matters in which they allowed themselves to interfere in a direct way, the British had imposed upon themselves a policy of *laissez-faire* in regard to the domestic affairs of Holland [2]. When Van Hogendorp communicated to Clancarty the text of the fundamental laws, Clancarty remarked that nobody would now be able to say that the British interfered in the internal affairs of Holland, because this was the first he had heard of the constitution [3].

There was, in this affectation of non-intervention, no theoretic love for the principle which at a later period of history was to become known as "self-determination." It was due to two considerations of a very different order. Although, in pressing for the solution of the problem of the Netherlands in a sense which agreed with the traditional policy of their country, the British Government had

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 34.

[2] One can see this from Clancarty's report to Castlereagh dated Dec. 1st, 1813. He describes how, when appealed to by the Prince who was trying to decide between an immediate proclamation of sovereignty at The Hague and a journey to Amsterdam for the purpose of a proclamation in that town, he "took the liberty of suggesting (and I trust that Your Lordship will not conceive I have gone too far) that the hasty step of a proclamation here.... might also have the effect of giving offence". (*Ged.* VII, p. 4).

[3] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, V, p. 91. He then allowed himself to give advice on one point: there should be an article giving the Sovereign Prince the right to dismiss officers from the army, again showing the usual concern of his government for the position of the Prince of Orange. Van Hogendorp was able to show Clancarty that an article to that effect existed already.

made no secret of the great interest they took in these arrangements, they wished nevertheless not to rouse the jealousy or the suspicions of their Allies by appearing too powerfully established in the Netherlands. The other reason for their professions was that they did not wish to give a hold to the criticism of the opposition party in England.

Nevertheless, definitely put aside in the matter of military affairs, the abstentionist policy was not too closely maintained where the popularity of the House of Orange was concerned, and it was not held to apply to the arrangements for the succession in the new constitution. This was due to the fact that the succession to the Dutch throne appeared at that time to be a direct concern of the English nation, in view of the intended marriage between the Hereditary Prince and Princess Charlotte. There is one other instance of an act on the part of Clancarty which, although it did not actually concern domestic affairs, was a remarkable case of interference with a Dutch government department. A fortnight after his arrival Clancarty suggested to Van der Duyn, the Dutch Foreign Secretary ad interim, that they should show one another their official despatches. This would make it possible for Van der Duyn and Clancarty, said the latter, to agree about the requests to be made by the Dutch to England [1]. Although Van der Duyn thought this proposal at least a little awkward, Clancarty obtained his wish [2].

A word may be added about another form of assistance given to Holland during the first weeks of its recovered independence. The Prince of Orange had no financial means at his disposal when the call came from Holland. He applied to Castlereagh who immediately obtained for him a grant of £ 100,000 from the Treasury [3]. This money naturally did not carry the Sovereign Prince very far, and as a result of a further application by Henry Fagel,

[1] Van der Duyn to H. Fagel, Dec. 14th, 1813. (*Ged.* VII, p. 397).

[2] The minute of a despatch from Van Hogendorp to Van Spaen, at the Rijksarchief, The Hague, dated Feb. 11th 1814, bears an important addition in the hand of Clancarty (*Ged.* VII, p. 496 and note 2).

[3] Nov. 22nd. 1813 (*Ged.* VI, p. 1974).

another grant of £ 100,000 was made on December 24th [1]. Efforts were made at once to raise a loan in Holland, but at the end of January the Dutch had to admit that only £ 200,000 had been subscribed. Thereupon Clancarty suggested that Great Britain might perhaps lend her credit to Holland by guaranteeing a loan to be raised in Holland, and that this loan might also be applied to provide funds for Great Britain. Clancarty was thinking that in this way British troops might be paid without remittances from England, which would in some degree operate in correction of the low rate of exchange [2]. The offer was, however, declined, because the Sovereign Prince and Van Hogendorp did not wish still further to increase their financial obligations to England [3]. Other means, such as appeals for the voluntary pre-payment of taxes, succeeded in tiding the Dutch government over its initial difficulties.

G. — *The Parliamentary Opposition in England and the New Régime in the Netherlands*

The care taken by the British Government to avoid the appearance of intervening in the internal affairs of Holland was, as we have mentioned, partly due to the wish not to lay itself open to the criticism of the parliamentary opposition. This does not mean that the Opposition would have been able to impose its policy on the Government. The Opposition was united by no fundamental principle, and was not backed by the country. Public opinion took little interest in the details of foreign affairs, and was eminently satisfied with the course of events in Holland during the months of November and December. Not only did it approve of everything that was being done for the liberation of Holland, but it heartily agreed

[1] H. Fagel to Sovereign Prince, Dec. 21st (*Ged.* VII, p. 408).

[2] Clancarty to Liverpool, Jan. 26th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 35). Sterling at that moment stood at less than 10 guilders.

[3] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 48.

with the support given to the Orange interests [1]. All the Opposition could do was to create difficulties in Parliament. The Government wanted to adjourn Parliament as soon as possible, in order to avoid awkward questions which might compromise the course of delicate diplomatic negotiations. In this way the Opposition was able to exercise an indirect influence upon the Government's policy.

Out-and-out hostility towards the war had become almost an exception among the non-governmental groups by the end of 1813. If a few radicals, and perhaps even Sir James Mackintosh, had kept alive their admiration for all things French and for the person of Napoleon, most of the Whigs had moved far away from the pacifism to which Fox himself had been unable to remain faithful. Lord Holland was interested in the liberation of Spain; Brougham, who had made the acquaintance of Van Hogendorp during a visit to Holland in 1804, and was in correspondence with the Dutch leader, was as keen about the re-establishment of Dutch independence as any member of the Government [2]. But the point on which the

[1] See, for instance, the experiences of the Dutchman Gevers, as he noted them in 1815 for the information of the Dutch historian Bosscha (*Ged.* VI, p. 1971-2). Arriving in England on Nov. 21st 1813, he was greeted by the acclamations of the populace. The post-chaise which took him from Yarmouth to London was adorned with English, Dutch and Orange flags, his postillions wore orange cockades, and the horses were be-ribboned with orange. Everywhere he met with the same enthusiasm. London was rejoicing at the liberation of Holland, and there were festive meals in all public places. The next day almost everyone was wearing orange in London, and there were shouts of "Huzza, God save the King and Holland!" Similar experiences are recounted by other Dutch travellers. The papers published Van Hogendorp's *Oranje Boven* proclamation in a prominent fashion. Castlereagh bears witness to this enthusiasm in a letter to Cathcart, dated Nov. 30th, 1813: "The popular spirit which has shewn itself there" (i.e. in Holland) "I look upon as one of the most fortunate events of the war. It has operated here as magick — there is nothing beyond the tone of the country at this moment". (*F. O. Russia*, 343).

[2] Brougham understood the problem of the Netherlands as no other Opposition leader did. He did not wish to leave the Southern Netherlands in the hands of France. On August 22nd, 1813, in a letter about the Austrian peace terms, he wrote to Lord Grey: "....for to speak of Holland being independent while Belgium is thoroughly French is preposterous". (Brougham, *Life and Times*, II, p. 82). It was not in virtue of the principle of self-determination that Brougham wished for the separation of the Southern Netherlands from France. Nobody in the Southern Netherlands dreamt of complete independence at that time.

The way in which the rank and file of the Opposition greeted the liberation of Holland is illustrated by an article in *The Nottingham Review* of Nov. 26th, 1813. The revolution in Holland was greeted as "brought about by the people". It presented, according to this paper, two advantages to the English nation. The Dutch "will take our merchandise, and will send us abundance of eatables in return". Moreover, "they have something else worth importing — a stock of opinions, inculcative of national independence, and an equal distribution of political liberty among the citizens". It is interesting to note that this utterance was considered subversive enough for the authorities to consult the law officers of the Home Office about the feasibility of instituting judicial proceedings against the paper. The officers, however, saw no terms for a successful prosecution (*H. O. Law Officers, Reports and Correspondence*, 17).

[1] Cobbett's *Political Register* supported this view with great violence. The number of Nov. 27th 1813 expressed fury at the "counter-revolution" which had broken out in Holland. On Dec. 4th the paper hinted that British troops were being sent to Holland only in order to support the Oranges against the nation, and tried to discredit the reports of popular rejoicings in that country. The number of Dec. 11th protested against the possibility of the Dutch becoming the conquerors of Austria's dominions.

[2] *Dropmore Papers*, X, p. 361.

Opposition agreed and were determined to insist was that the right of nations to choose their own allegiance and form of government should be recognised, and they wanted to see this principle applied to France as well as to the countries subjugated by the French. Furthermore, they wished that popular forms of government should be established wherever possible, and in their zeal for democracy they did not always prove able to distinguish between realities and names. In the case of Holland, where they naturally favoured the liberation of the country from French domination, they also wanted the restoration of the ancient republican form, unaware apparently that, notwithstanding its name, the Dutch Republic had been anything but a democracy [1].

This dual preoccupation explains the attitude adopted by Lord Grenville, the chief of the new Opposition. On Nov. 24th he wrote to Lord Grey about "the claims which the Dutch have, not on our favour, but on our justice" [2].

Two days later, having heard that his nephew Lord Buckingham had volunteered to accompany the militia to Holland, he congratulated him very warmly [1]. Yet, precisely a month later, when the changed situation made the departure of the militia unnecessary, he wrote to his nephew that, so far as he could see, there was not the slightest difference between fighting for King William the First, King Louis, or the Emperor Napoleon [2]. Grenville had been disappointed because the Prince of Orange had, in the meantime, become Sovereign of the Netherlands. Before the departure of the Prince he had had an extensive correspondence with Henry Fagel, and had told him that "in the unhappy event of the Prince of Orange being named Sovereign" he would enquire in Parliament whether this was in agreement with the wishes of the Dutch nation [3]. Grenville naturally remembered the trouble he had himself experienced as Foreign Secretary in 1799 when the British Admiral Duncan, in all innocence, announced to the Dutch that their "legitimate sovereign" was returning [4]. The events of the beginning of December apparently convinced Grenville that the wishes of the Dutch nation had not been thwarted [5], and he gave up

[1] You have now been the first to accompany them" (i.e. the militia) "to Holland, for the purpose, I hope, of fully discharging the debt of honour and gratitude which our country owes to that people." Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Regency*, II, pp. 44–45.

[2] Grenville to Buckingham, Dec. 24th, 1813. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[3] This letter has not been preserved, but we know its contents from a letter written to H. Fagel by Lord Malmesbury, dated Nov. 26th, 1813, who had been shown the correspondence and quoted, in his comments, some of the utterances of Lord Grenville. (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, I, pp. 20–22.)

[4] *Ged.* III, p. 393.

[5] Just before New Year's Day, 1814, Ambassador Fagel had a conversation with Lord Grenville, which he reports to Van Hogendorp in a letter of Jan. 2nd. 1814 (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, I, pp. 64–66). Grenville said that he did not altogether approve of the manner in which the sovereignty had been conferred upon the Prince of Orange, as it were "by a tumultuary acclamation of the crowd". He would not be able to consider the sovereignty as really legitimate until it had been conferred solemnly upon the Prince by a Convention or Grand Assembly, and gave Fagel to understand that if, pending this solemn decision, the Prince had only accepted the sovereignty in a provisional way, there would have been no further opposition in England.

his intention of harassing the Government in the House of Lords.

Lord Grey, the offical leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords, also allowed himself to be convinced that the change of government was the result of the free choice of the Dutch nation, but it was a long time before he resigned himself to it [1]. He regretted that, instead of being submitted to the approval of the Dutch only after it was ready, the constitution had not been drawn up after the nation had been consulted [2]. Brougham, who had undertaken the ask of converting Grey, appears to have been successful in the end [3]. Lord Holland, speaking in the House of Lords on December 20th, 1813, expressed regret that the Dutch were narrowing rather than widening the basis of their government. He disapproved of the change which, he feared, might lead to considerable mischief [4]. Lord Auckland, who had called the liberation of Holland "the best and most important event of this most eventful year", disapproved of the proclamation of the

[1] Grey to Grenville, Nov. 28th: "I have no hesitation.... to say with you that it would be difficult indeed to fix any limit to the extent of the exertions we are bound to make in war, or to the sacrifices we are bound to make in negotiation, to secure the independence of a country which has so many claims upon us". (*Dropmore Papers*, X, p. 365). But on Dec. 19th he expressed his full agreement with Grenvilie's criticisms of the support given to the House of Orange (*Ibid.*, p. 367).

[2] Grey to Brougham, Jan 14th. 1814. Brougham, *Life* II, pp. 102–3. Grey had also heard the rumours about the lack of military exertion on the part of the Dutch. "From the proclamations that have appeared, and from accounts which I have seen from some of our officers, it looks as if Mynheer was not quite so alert as he ought to be", which of course was an argument for the view that the Dutch were lacking in enthusiasm for the new régime.

[3] On Jan. 28th, 1814 Brougham — according to a reply from Van Hogendorp dated Feb. 16th — had informed the latter that Lord Grey was pleased with the Dutch consitution. (*Ged.* VII pp. 502–3).

[4] "Such a step forms indeed a striking contrast to the conduct of Spain, who has followed a policy that should direct every people, namely that it is wiser to enlarge than to contract the basis of the government" (*Hansard* XXVII, 293). This referred to the liberal constitution which Spain had given herself in 1812.

sovereignty of the Prince of Orange as a revolutionary novelty [1].

By far the most virulent critic of the Dutch restoration was Sir James Mackintosh, the historian and apologist of the French Revolution. On December 4th, 1813, in the House of Commons, he accused the Ministers of having connived at the destruction of the ancient government of Holland, and implied that the British Government knew beforehand that the Prince of Orange was going to Holland with the intention of assuming "titles and authorities unknown to the legal constitution of the United Provinces". In his reply for the Government, Castlereagh asserted that "the form of government which had been adopted was the result of the spontaneous and unanimous wish of the people of Holland of all parties", and reiterated the Government's anxious desire to abstain from any interference with the domestic concerns of that country [2]. On December 20th, Mackintosh returned to the attack. In opposing the Government's motion for the adjournment of Parliament to March 1st, 1814, he emphatically declared himself convinced that the British Government was entirely cleared from the suspicion of having planned the overthrow of the ancient republican constitution of Holland, but he expressed regret that the independence of an old and faithful ally "should be regarded with such levity, and that the ancient Dutch Republic should be subverted in a tumultuary manner by a few gentlemen (the inhabitants of two towns only) and in the presence of a foreign force". Mackintosh lamented the disappearance of that ancient constitution with rhetoric and reiteration, and appealed to the Government and to the country at least to see to it that the Prince of Orange kept his word and gave the Dutch their promised constitution [3]. Several members of the Opposition disapproved of the attitude taken by Mackintosh, who almost certainly was not

[1] Auckland to Grenville, Nov. 22nd (*Dropmore Papers*, X, 359): Dec. 13th (*Ibid.*, p. 367).
[2] *Hansard*, XXVII, 282.
[3] *Ibid.*, XXVII, 306.

representing the views of the majority of his party [1].

"Nobody thought it worth while to speak on the Ministerial side", noted Colchester in his diary [2]. But in Holland, more importance was attached to this and similar utterances. "I wish that *le chevalier Mackintosh* knew my opinion and that of practically the whole of our nation about the question of Sovereignty", sighed the Sovereign Prince after reading his speech [3]. The Dutch Government decided to prevent further criticism by communicating to the British Government and to leading politicians Van Hogendorp's memorandum on the constitution, which was then being distributed to members of the commission that was to lay down the final text of the fundamental law. On March 29th 1814 this document appeared in *The Courier*, which had obtained a copy from one of the recipients [4]. On the same day Mackintosh expressed his complete approval of the new constitution to the Dutch Ambassador, who found that he had entirely revised his old opinions [5].

Mention has already been made of the part played by Brougham (who was then, although temporarily out of Parliament, taking an active part in politics) as an intermediary between the British Opposition and the Dutch Government. Lord Malmesbury disliked the fact that Van Hogendorp was in correspondence with Brougham, but he was mistaken when he told Henry Fagel that such a correspondence could have no use [6]. It certainly influenced Brougham, who in turn influenced the

[1] H. Fagel to J. Fagel, Dec. 25th, 1813. (*Ged.* VII, p. 817) H. Fagel attributes the attitude of Mackintosh to the influence of Madame de Staël.
[2] II, p. 464. Dec. 20th. 1813.
[3] Sovereign Prince to H. Fagel, Dec. 25th, 1813 (Colenbrander, *Grondwet* I, p. 39).
[4] Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, I, p. IX.
[5] H. Fagel to Van Hogendorp, March 29th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 528).
[6] "I am certainly sorry that Hogendorp was so ill-advised as to run to such a ruthless man as Brougham: he is utterly void of principle or virtue of any kind; he is moreover not in Parliament, and the only consequence he now can boast of, is the having been addressed by the first minister in Holland on this occasion". Malmesbury to H. Fagel, Dec. 26th, 1813 (*Ged.* VII, p. 15).

Opposition leaders in favour of the new régime in Holland. Brougham had a high opinion of Van Hogendorp [1]. Like the other Opposition leaders, Brougham showed immediate concern lest revolution should occasion the loss of ancient Dutch liberties. He told Grey he hoped the Dutch would not follow the precedent of the English restoration when the old masters were taken back without terms. The advice he addressed to Van Hogendorp on November 30th, when he wrote to congratulate him on the liberation of his country, shows that Brougham understood the history of Holland infinitely better than his political friends, including the historian Mackintosh. "The old constitution of the States General you would probably not think of reviving", he wrote, but he added a warning against substituting an absolute form of monarchy [2]. Brougham appeared no more enthusiastic than his friends about the increase of power of the House of Orange, but his acceptance of the innovation, based on the principle of self-determination, was much completer than that of the other Opposition leaders [3]. However, he advised the Dutch to submit the constitution when completed to the notables of the nation [4].

To sum up, then, we may say that the British parliamentary Opposition unanimously welcomed the

[1] Brougham to Lord Grey, Nov. 27th, 1813: "The person who is now at the head of affairs in Holland, Mr. Van Hogendorp, is one of the best and ablest men I ever knew. He is a particular friend of mine and a constant correspondent". (Brougham, *Life*, II).

[2] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* IV, p. 279. Brougham also added the advice that the Dutch should immediately forbid the slave trade, after which England would find it extremely difficult not to be very liberal about the return of the colonies.

[3] Brougham to Lord Grey, December 16th, 1813: "The acknowledgment of the Prince of Orange as sovereign seems to me only in conformity to the principle of noti nterfering, and I really do not know what else the ministers could have done. If he and the Dutch choose to call him the Grand Lama, what is it to us? and what though we did know of his intention?" (Brougham, *Life*, II, p. 99).

[4] Brougham to Grey, Jan. 15th, 1814. (Brougham, *Life*, II, pp. 104—5). About that time Brougham also received a friendly message from Falck. His correspondence with Van Hogendorp continued for some time, and on occasion he sent press cuttings and other news to his Dutch friend.

liberation of Holland, but that, if somewhat less unanimously, they regretted the disappearance of the ancient republican form of government, although they felt no hostility towards the House of Orange or its present head. They accepted the new situation in consequence of their doctrine of non-interference, and the only direct influence they exercised upon the course of affairs during the first months of the independence of Holland was that they kept the British Government to a somewhat stricter observance of the principle of non-interference than it would have been likely to adopt of its own accord. There is some irony in the fact that the people who cared least of all about the liberties so jealously defended by the British Opposition were the Dutch themselves, who looked upon the constitution-mongering that was going on in their midst with complete apathy [1]. To the few minds more actively interested in politics the new régime was universally acceptable. The old Orangists saw with pleasure the immense increase of the power of the House of Orange, and the former "Patriots" hailed the advent of centralisation which had always been dearer to their hearts than freedom. Not a murmur was raised because the constitution as finally promulgated was infinitely more monarchical and absolutist than had been forecast in Van Hogendorp's published memorandum. The only new political weekly which had been established since the restoration soon died a natural death. The period of sloth which was to last for more than a generation had begun: the Dutch were resting on the laurels of their "glorious revolution".

H. — *Britain and the Foreign Relations of the Dutch State*

The foreign relations of the restored Dutch state were naturally, during the months which preceded the first peace of Paris, somewhat restricted in scope. Negotiations with the Allied Powers mainly concerned the peace

[1] Cf. Colenbrander, *Vestiging*, pp. 88—92.

settlement, and in particular the new southern frontier of the state, although there were some difficulties with Prussia regarding the recovery of parts of the ancient territory of the Dutch Republic. These negotiations were mostly conducted in intimate co-operation with Great Britain. Two questions arose, that of relations with the United States of America and that of the Barbary States, which belonged to an entirely different order of facts. Both instances prove how completely, during those first months of its existence, the Dutch Government took its directions from London.

Before the period of French domination trade relations between the Dutch Republic and the United States had been regulated by the Commercial Treaty of 1782, which guaranteed most favoured nation treatment to both parties. This treaty had lapsed on the annexation of Holland to France in 1810. Immediately after the restoration, Bourne, the former Consul General of the United States in Amsterdam, had, on his own initiative, made overtures for the re-establishment of the old trade relationship[1]. On December 8th, 1813, Bourne wrote to Van Hogendorp and suggested that a new commercial treaty should be concluded on the basis of that of 1782. Shortly afterwards [2], Clancarty told Van Hogendorp that Great Britain did not wish that for her sake Holland should be on bad terms with America, that it would be useful to recognise Bourne as Consul General of the United States, and that trade relations could then be re-opened with that country. Castlereagh spoke in the same sense to Henry Fagel in London. Van Hogendorp states explicitly [3] that the first mention of this matter was made by Clancarty. It was, therefore, not as a result of Bourne's overture that

[1] "Gegevens over de Handelsrelaties van Nederland met de Vereenigde Staten van Noord Amerika in de eerste Jaren na het Herstel", by W. N. Posthumus, in *Economisch Historisch Jaarboek*, I, pp. 199–240.

[2] Van Hogendorp, who relates the British side of these negotiations, does not give the date, but says it was during the first weeks of the restoration (*Br. en Ged.* V, pp. 76–77, 209, 466–7). Great Britain and America were still at war at that time.

[3] In a letter of Dec. 26th. to Fagel (*Ibid*, p. 209).

Clancarty broached the subject, although subsequently during the month of December the American overture was discussed between Clancarty and Van der Duyn, Acting Foreign Secretary during Van Hogendorp's illness. Van Hogendorp and the Sovereign Prince were naturally exercised about the real motive of the British Government's promptings. Van Hogendorp told Clancarty that he thought Great Britain wished to make peace through Holland. This, however, the Ambassador denied. Although it is a fact that only a month before, on November 4th, Castlereagh had made official peace overtures to America [1], Clancarty's denial was entirely genuine. For, having rejected an offer of Russian mediation, Great Britain could not very well resort to the good offices of Holland. Besides, her statesmen considered relations with America almost as a domestic concern. Van Hogendorp came to the conclusion that England attached great importance to focussing the attention of the world upon Holland, and interpreted the move as an attempt at strengthening the diplomatic status of the new country. Clancarty advised the Sovereign Prince to send an official intimation of his accession to America, and to despatch an accredited representative on a mission to the United States. "We do not wish that you should be embroiled in a maritime war while you have to make the greatest possible exertions on the Continent", said Clancarty. "We wish you to enrich yourselves by trade, for it is to our advantage that you should again become rich". This wish, let it be noted in passing, did not extend so far that Great Britain was willing to favour Dutch trade with America by any concessions which might have meant the slightest abatement of her claim to the right of search. Castlereagh warned Fagel that the state of war would necessarily cause hindrances (*des entraves*) to the commerce between Holland and America. On December 26th Bourne was recognised as Consul General by the Dutch Government. But he was at the same time informed that there could be no question at this stage of merely renewing the old

[1] *British and Foreign State Papers*, I, part 2, pp. 1543 sqq.

treaty. This decision was apparently taken as a result of consultation between Clancarty and Van Hogendorp. In July 1814 a Dutch Minister was appointed to the Government of the United States. This Minister, Changuion, was entrusted with the conduct of further negotiations, but he decided that while the war between England and America lasted it was inadvisable to start upon negotiations, and waited therefore until the news of the peace of Ghent arrived in America. In the ensuing negotiations Changuion himself took the treaty of 1782 as a starting point. The American Government, however, attached little importance to the conclusion of a new treaty, and the negotiations dragged on until, at the beginning of 1818, the trade relations between the two countries were settled, not by treaty but by parallel national legislation.

Another problem of foreign relations which arose immediately after the liberation of Holland was dealt with in intimate co-operation with the British, and in a manner where the British connection was undoubtedly very useful to the Dutch. As soon as Dutch merchant vessels could again show themselves upon the high seas, it was decided to restore trade relations with the Barbary Coast, as well as to safeguard the ships against attacks by the pirates from Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. The last time the Dutch flag had been shown in North African waters had been when in 1802 the Batavian Republic had sent a small squadron to the Mediterranean; but this had not been a very successful manifestation of strength, and the renewed outbreak of war had entirely interrupted trade with Algiers and Tunisia. There was, furthermore, the continual danger to shipping from the attacks of Barbary pirates, against which all European states were powerless until the French took rigorous measures in 1830. The only flag for which the pirates had any respect was the British [1]. It was natural, therefore, that the Dutch should have thought at once of availing themselves of their intimate connection with England,

[1] Castlereagh to Bathurst, Aug. 17th, 1813 (*Bathurst Papers*, p. 372).

when they decided, in January 1814, to take steps with the Barbary States for the protection of their flag. The Sovereign Prince considered that such a *démarche* should in the first instance be made through England [1]. The British Government thereupon expressed its willingness to assist in the re-establishment of a "good understanding", and announced that meanwhile Dutch vessels could use the protection of British convoys [2]. The Prince decided to send the new Dutch consuls through England, and to arrange for them to be introduced to the local authorities by the British consuls.

An independent attempt was made in 1815 to establish relations with Algiers, and in July a Dutch squadron under Rear Admiral Tulleken appeared before the town and enquired whether the regency was disposed to revive the former trade relations with the Netherlands [3]. This visit does not appear to have had any results.

In 1816, the Barbary States were again causing trouble to British shipping, and England decided to send warships to Algiers, the worst offender. She invited the collaboration of the Dutch, who sent a squadron of six vessels under Vice Admiral Van Capellen. These ships joined the squadron commanded by Lord Exmouth, and bombarded Algiers on August 27th, 1816. As a consequence Omar, the Dey of Algiers, was compelled to conclude a treaty of Peace with Great Britain and with Holland, and to free all Christian slaves in his dominions [4].

[1] The Sovereign Prince to Van Hogendorp, Jan. 7th 1814 (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, V, p. 228).

[2] Van Hogendorp to Sovereign Prince, Jan. 29th; Sovereign Prince to Van Hogendorp, Jan. 30th, 1814 (*Ibid.* pp. 269–271).

[3] Report of H. McDonnell, British Consul at Algiers, July 29th, 1815. (*Bathurst Papers*, pp. 362–3).

[4] Stern, *Europäische Geschichte*, I. pp. 213–4; Hertslett, *Treaties and Conventions*, I, pp. 86–88, for the British Treaty, Lagemans, *Recueil* I, no. 49, for the Dutch Treaty, Art. 2 of which stipulates that a Consul General for the Netherlands will be received at Algiers, precisely on the same footing as the British Consul, and will be treated with the same respect.

I. — *Trade Relations between Great Britain and Liberated Holland*

Dutch sea-going trade had not been entirely killed by the continental blockade. The French authorities granted licences to a small number of vessels that sailed to England with French luxury articles and Dutch dairy produce, and allowed them to return with certain specified cargoes. But as many of the goods which had to be exported as a condition for obtaining the licence were not allowed into England, the licensed vessels had usually to choose between infringing the French or the English law. Navigation under these conditions had become almost impossible, and smuggling was practically the only form in which it was still carried on about the end of the Napoleonic régime. As soon as a national government had been established in Holland, the commercial classes began to clamour for the re-establishment of foreign trade. Already on November 27th the Commissioners General in Amsterdam transmitted to The Hague enquiries whether it was permissible to sail for England without licences [1], while from Rotterdam came requests from merchants who had imported goods from England under licence and wished to take them out of bond [2]. The Amsterdammers asked on the same day that a deputy should be sent to England to enquire about the intentions of the British Government.

Van Hogendorp, who in his very first proclamation had optimistically declared that trade was reviving, entirely agreed with the views of the people of Amsterdam. "The sea must be free, and trade must revive", he replied on the following day, and he added that he intended to send a deputation to England in order to settle the matter of sailing licences. That very day [3] he wrote to Henry

[1] *Ged.* VI, part 3, p. CXXIX.

[2] *Ibid*, p. CXXXII. Several other requests by owners of vessels that were already partly or completely laden, and who wished to know under what conditions they might sail, were sent to the provisional government during the last days of November and at the beginning of December (*Ibid.*, pp. CLXVIII, CLXXII).

[3] Nov. 28th, 1813 (*Ibid.*, p. XC).

Fagel in London asking him to obtain British protection for the Dutch vessels that were preparing to sail. So fully did Van Hogendorp place his trust in the British that he asked Fagel in the same letter to send him a copy of the orders that would be issued [1]. But the British Government did not move with the rapidity which Van Hogendorp had expected. They showed themselves unwilling to allow free intercourse with Holland before there was more certainty about the situation in that country [2].

The British were not less anxious than the Dutch to restore trade relations with other nations. During the war they had acquired all the productive colonies of the world and their warehouses were brimful of produce which they wanted to pour into the markets of Europe. Their desire to start selling was the greater in that they wanted to utilise the brief time that would elapse before normal intercourse was re-established between the colonies and their ancient owners. On December 7th. 1813 the Sovereign Prince had restored the tariff introduced in 1725, with the subsequent modifications enacted prior to the French régime. This was only intended as a provisional measure. There existed some vague hopes of concluding a commercial treaty with Great Britain, but the situation was still too uncertain even to formulate such designs. The British wanted to obtain more immediate advantages, and on December 13th Clancarty presented a note to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs asking for elucidations of the ordinance of December 7th. On what terms he asked, would refined sugars, teas, and other East Indian goods be allowed into the country [3]? Van Hogendorp replied in a note dated December 24th which by no

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* IV, p. 269.

[2] H. Fagel replied to Van Hogendorp's letter on Dec. 3rd 1813: "As soon as it is known that Holland is perfectly freed of enemy troops and the Helder at the disposal of the Prince, I am convinced that the necessary orders will be given for the re-establishment of commercial intercourse between the two countries" (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, IV, p. 275).

[3] Clancarty to Van der Duyn, in Posthumus, *Documenten* I, (*Engeland*), pp. 1–2. Cf. also introduction to the same vol.

means conceded the wishes that, although unexpressed, underlay Clancarty's request for information. Refined sugar, said the Dutch Minister, could not be admitted, in view of the existence of a domestic refining industry. Colonial produce was only to be imported under specific licences. The new government did not wish to rush into legislation, but would examine the situation in accordance with the most liberal principles [1].

While this exchange of views was taking place, the Brittish Government had put itself to some pains in order to assist Holland's first attempt at recovering its trade. Orders were given for convoys to be procured for Dutch bottoms, and British Consuls were everywhere directed to give assistance to Dutch merchants. An indiscretion caused the publication of these facts by one of the Dutch papers, with the result that there were serious complaints from British merchants. For notwithstanding all the expressions of political goodwill, the British public still remembered the Dutch as trade rivals [2].

Almost immediately after the liberation of Holland a difficulty arose which shed a strong light upon the latent trade antagonism between the two nations. Notwithstanding the loss suffered as a result of the English Navigation Acts, Dutch shipping had to a large extent remained a carrying trade. The export of Dutch produce to England could take place in Dutch ships, although colza, calf-hides, and madder were usually shipped from Holland in English bottoms; so, more frequently than not, were butter and cheese. Most of the Dutch tonnage was used to carry grain, flax, and other produce from the North and the Baltic to Portugal, Spain, and the Mediterranean. From these countries some goods of small bulk were brought back. Right through the eighteenth century a method had been followed by which the disparity between the northward and the southward flow of merchandise had been artificially compensated. A large

[1] Van Hogendorp to Clancarty, Posthumus, I, pp. 2-4. Cf. Colenbrander, *Vestiging*, pp. 95 sqq.

[2] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, V, pp. 77-8.

portion of the catch of Dutch fishermen was salted and exported along the rivers to Germany. The necessary salt could be obtained from England or from Spain and Portugal, and by taxing the southern salt much less heavily than the English the Dutch authorities had made it possible for ships returning from the Iberian Peninsula to take in cargoes of salt and to dispose of them on their return home. This regulation was re-introduced with all the others by the decree of December 7th 1813 [1].

At the end of February the British Ambassador enquired from Van Hogendorp as to the reason for the discrimination against English rock salt, and within a fortnight the hint was taken and the differentiation was suspended until the middle of the year. Clancarty immediately asked for further concessions and with the same rapidity the suspension was extended until the end of the year 1814 (May 6th 1814). This was not enough. Three days after the new decision Clancarty returned to the charge and requested "the absolute repeal of the obnoxious duties". The law of January 14th 1815 gave him complete satisfaction.

The result of the capitulation was not favourable to Dutch mercantile shipping. It had all kinds of indirect results. Dutch seeds which had been carried cheaply to Ireland on Dutch ships had now to go by English ships, because the latter were able to take English salt on their outward journey. But Dutch fishing benefited. Salt became considerably cheaper, and greater profits were made from the export of salt fish to Germany. The salt refineries in Holland also profited by the cheapening of their raw material. Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether without pressure from the British side, the measure which had these favourable results would have been taken. Another case presently arose, in which advantage was

[1] Memorials of the chambers of commerce of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Dordrecht; Clancarty to Van Hogendorp, Feb. 28th; Van Hogendorp to Clancarty, March 13th; Van Nagell to Sovereign Prince, May 1st, 1814; advice of the Dutch Board of Trade and Colonies to the Sovereign Prince, Dec. 13th 1814 (Posthumus, *Documenten*, I, pp. 5–27. Also *Ibid*, introd., pp. XI–XII).

reaped by British trade without any compensation to the Dutch. The agricultural interests in England and especially in Ireland complained, in the course of 1815, about the competition of Dutch butter and cheese, and the British Government at the beginning of 1816 decided to raise the import duty on foreign butter very considerably. As, since the liberation of Holland, one quarter of London's daily consumption of 125,000 lbs. of butter had come from the Dutch provinces of Holland and Friesland, the British plan caused great alarm in the Netherlands. An attempt made in Holland to counteract the British plan by exempting butter from the Dutch export tax proved useless, the British Government announcing that any rebate given in Holland would be added automatically to the tax on butter levied in England. In 1817 the tariff was raised again [1]. The dissatisfaction of the Dutch was naturally increased by their feeling of utter powerlessness; and in the course of the following years the economic estrangement between the British and their political protégés grew even more marked.

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[1] Documents and correspondence in Posthumus, *Documenten* I, pp. 28–39. In the course of the oral negotiations Clancarty gave as an example the use of Dutch madder, which, he said, was not taxed any higher than that which came from the Levant, a striking parallel which impressed Van Hogendorp very much until he discovered that Clancarty's facts were wrong and that Dutch madder was liable to a much higher duty than that from the Levant (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 79).

CHAPTER III

THE HANOVER ORANGE MARRIAGE PLAN

A. The Origin and Political Significance of the Plan
B. The Official Negotiations about the Marriage
C. The Engagement in its Personal Aspects, and the Question of Charlotte's Future Residence
D. The Rupture
E. The Russian Intrigue — Anglo-Russian Rivalry
F. Brougham, his Colleagues of the Opposition, and the Marriage Plan

A. — *The Origin and Political Significance of the Plan*

We have seen in the introduction how, when his credit in England was at its lowest ebb, the future Sovereign Prince of the Netherlands sent his son to England in order to use him as a connecting link with the Royal House, the Government, and the public of England. The tradition of matrimonial connections between the House of Orange and the Royal House of England [1] may have led William VI to entertain notions of a new alliance between his son and the daughter of the Prince Regent. But, as we also saw, the mere idea of such a marriage horrified Lord Auckland, a former Ambassador at The Hague. Yet, as a minor part in the Sovereign Prince's scheme for a *rapprochement* towards England, the idea of a marriage soon found its way into the minds of diplomats. It may have been suggested by Malmesbury, who at a later period was told by the Prince that the marriage plan was in part his work. When in January 1809 the Prince drew up instructions for his *grand écuyer* Van Heerdt, whom he was sending to England, he pointed out that this marriage

[1] P. Geyl. *Willem IV en Engeland*, pp. 5–12.

would be of so great an advantage to his son that although no definite steps could at present be taken, Van Heerdt was nevertheless to neglect no opportunity of preparing the way for it. It was carefully arranged whom the young Prince was to visit during his passage through London — no easy matter, in view of the peculiar relations between the members of the Royal Family. All the royal personages were to be called upon in strict order of precedence, and a visit to the Princess Caroline of Wales was not to be forgotten.

The two years spent by the young Prince at Oxford were uneventful. He did not follow the usual curriculum, but special courses were arranged in order to acquaint him with the English language and English institutions. The mere presence of the Prince sufficed to keep alive the revived though languid interest taken in the affairs of his House, and the idea of a possible Hanover-Orange marriage may sometimes have occurred to English statesmen during that period [1]. On the Prince of Wales becoming Regent, the Prince of Orange, who was then in Berlin, thought it expedient to consult him about the future of his son, and early in 1811, the course of studies meanwhile drawing to its end, the best manner of maintaining the connection with England appeared to the elder Prince of Orange to be the departure of his son for Wellington's army. The consent of the Regent, of the Government, and of Wellington was easily obtained, and at the end of the academic session young William left for the Peninsula. Wellington appointed him aide-de-camp, and expressed his approval when, under fire for the first time, the Prince "conducted himself with spirit and intelligence which afford a hope that he will become an ornament to his profession."

No higher expectations seemed allowed to the Prince, at that time, than that of becoming an ornament to the military profession. But when, in the beginning of 1812, war between France and Russia appeared inevitable, William VI once more allowed himself to make plans for

[1] *Ged.* V, p. 826.

a happier future. He wrote to his son that, when the time came for Princess Charlotte to think of marriage, he might well be chosen [1]. The father recognised that he could himself do nothing to determine her choice, but hoped that by this conduct the Prince would deserve to be taken into consideration. Without any enthusiasm, and only for the good of his house, the Hereditary Prince agreed [2].

We have seen before how in 1813 a strong element in the English Cabinet favoured William VII against his father, William VI. Their efforts were in vain, and the young Prince himself made it sufficiently clear that he was not his father's competitor. But one of the results of the attention given to the personal aspects of the Orange restoration was that by the middle of the year the marriage was being discussed quite openly. William VI found the Regent and the Royal family agreeably impressed by the Hereditary Prince, and in particular his affected indifference in the matter of the alliance was greatly appreciated. From the personal point of view, William VI was not without his doubts. Charlotte did not appear a very desirable wife for his son, but, like the son himself, he held that personal considerations ought to give way to the interests of his House. We do not know when the subject was first broached between the Prince Regent and the Prince of Orange. But we do know that their relations had become very friendly, and we may assume that the alliance of the two Houses had come to be considered as a possibility without either of the parties having approached the topic in a formal way. And so, when in November 1813 Holland once more took her place among the independent nations of Europe and the matter, from being merely dynastic, became one of international importance, the Prince Regent had already become a zealous protagonist of the match.

That he wished to marry off his daughter, and if possible send her abroad, is certain enough. The Regent was

[1] March 3rd 1812 (*Ged.* VI, pp. 1830—2).
[2] June 18th 1812, William VII to his father (*ibid*, pp. 1835—7).

obsessed with his own matrimonial affairs. The thought that, as she grew older and would take a more prominent position in the eyes of the nation, his daughter might become a champion of his hated wife must have been ever present in his mind. Yet, however severely one judges the Regent, one cannot deny that he was really interested in international affairs and understood them thoroughly. He was in complete agreement with his Government on the main points of their foreign policy [1]. A matrimonial union between the House of Orange and the Royal House of England would place the former in the position of a friend and protégé of England [2], and would make the Allies readier to give to Holland the advantages and the increase of territory which England wanted for her. This is why it was considered necessary that on his arrival at Headquarters Castlereagh should inform the Allied courts of the intended marriage [3]. But the marriage was at the same time meant to increase the prestige of the House of Orange in Holland, and thus to support the policy of England which, as we have already seen, wished "to strengthen the executive government in the hands of the Prince of Orange." This policy could not better be forwarded than by the application of the ancient formula: a marriage alliance with the reigning House of England. If such considerations held good in England, they were equally obvious to the Dutch. The scarcely expected turn in his affairs had made the Prince of Orange even more desirous of the alliance, which became now as useful to his country as to his House. There was complete agreement and understanding on this matter between the British and the Dutch.

No less complete was their agreement on another

[1] Webster, *Castlereagh*, p. 7.

[2] Brockhausen, Prussian Ambassador at The Hague, to King Frederick William III, Aug. 10th 1814: "Ce projet, qui a toujours tenu à coeur au Prince Régent et à une partie du ministère britannique, et qui est lié à la maxime dominante aujourd'hui de s'attacher ce pays-ci par tous les liens possibles" (*Ged.* VII, p. 305).

[3] Memorandum of the Cabinet meeting of Dec. 26th 1813 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 16 sqq.).

aspect of the marriage. There must be no reason for jealousy on the part of the Allies; and nothing could have been more certain to lead to jealousy than the possibility of an eventual union of the British and the Dutch crowns on one head. For it was already generally known that the Sovereign Prince was eventually to become King of his country. The possibility of a new King William reigning at the same time in England and in Holland had to be avoided at all costs. For this desire the English Ministers had another motive, apart from the one they had in common with Holland. However carefully a personal union may be surrounded with safeguards so as to keep separate the interests of the two countries brought together under one sovereign, its results are bound to outrun intentions. England did not wish to own Holland. That would only mean the moving eastward of her own frontier, and the assumption of direct responsibility for the defence of new territory. England wanted a fortress to the east, but she did not want to incorporate Holland in her own citadel. And so, with the announcement of the intended marriage, Castlereagh was also charged to inform the Allies that measures would be taken to assure the separation of the succession in the two countries. Van Spaen, the Dutch representative at Allied Headquarters, was instructed in the same sense [1], and only when agreement on that point had become certain was the Hereditary Prince called back to England and the consent of the Princess Charlotte definitely sought and obtained (December 12th 1813).

B. — *The Official Negotiations about the Marriage*

It was considered necessary by the advisers of the British Crown to insert the stipulations as to the separate succession in the marriage contract, and to strengthen

[1] Van Hogendorp to Van Spaen, Dec. 25th (*Ged.* VII, p. 417). It was thought that in Holland the fear of a personal union might also exist, no doubt because such a union would make Holland too much a subsidiary partner. Van Hogendorp to Fagel. Dec. 26th (*ibid.*, p. 423).

them by a provision in the Dutch constitution. At no time did the English proposal meet with any opposition on the part of the Dutch. There were, indeed, protracted negotiations, but they were only concerned with the precise wording of the contract, and the Sovereign Prince as well as his ministers gave repeated expression to their "perfect consent" and to their appreciation of the liberality of the British Government [1]. Indeed, nothing was hurried and no reason for haste existed, as Castlereagh was particularly desirous of being able to announce the engagement himself to Parliament when it re-assembled. He hoped in this way to prevent hostile criticism by answering at once any objection that might come from the side of the Opposition. The secret was, however, badly guarded, and owing to a misunderstanding the Sovereign Prince actually announced the engagement to the Assembly of notables summoned to approve the new constitution at The Hague on March 30th 1814.

In the meantime, on February 23rd, the Hereditary Prince of Orange had written to the Regent, formally asking for the hand of the Princess Charlotte, and his father wrote in support of his request. The bearer of these letters was Van der Duyn van Maasdam [2], who came to London to represent the Sovereign Prince at the negotiations for the marriage treaty. There is no need to follow these negotiations in detail. At no time was there any disagreement as to the principle that the sovereignty of Britain and that of the Netherlands were never to be united in one person. It was agreed from the beginning that the first son born of the marriage would succeed in England, and the second in Holland. If there were no second son, the Dutch succession would go to a collateral branch of the House of Nassau.

[1] Van Hogendorp to Van Spaen, Dec. 25th 1813 (*Ged.* VII, p. 417); Sovereign Prince to H. Fagel, Dec. 26th (*ibid.*, p. 418); Van Hogendorp to H. Fagel, same date (*ibid.*, p. 423); Sovereign Prince to King Frederick William III of Prussia, same date (*ibid.*, p. 418); Van Hogendorp to H. Fagel, Jan. 8th 1814: "Toutes les parties sont d'accord" (*ibid.*, p. 451).

[2] He has left memoirs, which are very inaccurate.

About the middle of March negotiations were sufficiently advanced for the Regent to write his official consent, and for a draft of the contract to be sent to Holland. The date of the marriage was to depend on the course of military operations on the Continent, but the end of May or the beginning of June was now thought a likely time. In the course of April the negotiations dealt more particularly with the manner in which and the place where the children born of the marriage would be educated. Eventually, agreement was reached on a revised draft submitted by the Chancellor, Lord Eldon, on May 1st. Other, subsidiary, questions had been examined meanwhile. On the English side, there was at least a suggestion that a Regency Bill might be expedient which would settle the Regency on the Princess Charlotte in case the Regent pre-deceased his father [1]; while in Holland the possibility of settling the difficult problem of the separate succession in an entirely different manner was being discussed. Contrary to Stockmar's assertion that there never was the least idea that either the Prince or the Princess should renounce their rights of succession [2], there is evidence that the Sovereign Prince seriously considered the possibility of his second son's succeeding in Holland, while the Hereditary Prince would merely be Prince Consort in England, and remain satisfied with the succession in the hereditary Nassau lands [3].

By this time, however, a difficulty had arisen, which modified the whole trend of the negotiations at the moment when they had practically been brought to a

[1] Colchester, *Diary*, Vol. II, p. 476.

[2] Stockmar, *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 11.

[3] On April 3rd 1814 the Sovereign Prince sent a note to Van Hogendorp, asking him to be present that same day as witness to the signature of an act by which the Hereditary Prince would cede to his brother Frederick his rights to the Nassau lands, "with the reservation of their reversibility, in case the United Netherlands came to the latter or to his descendants" (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Gedenkschriften*, V, p. 358). Van Hogendorp, who particularly notes the fact that as long as the marriage negotiations were making progress the Sovereign Prince confided entirely in him, says that owing to the intended English marriage there was a good chance that the second son would succeed in Holland (*ibid.*, p. 64).

conclusion. This was the question of the future place of residence of the Princess Charlotte, and it can only be understood by a more thorough examination of the personal aspects of the marriage plan.

C. — *The Engagement in its Personal Aspects, and the Question of Charlotte's Future Residence*

At the time of her engagement Charlotte was not quite eighteen years old. Although she could not be called beautiful, she was agreeable to look at — fresh, tall, and well built, if perhaps a little too massive. She was vivacious, with a vitality that was somewhat overwhelming. The lack of method in her upbringing had accentuated her impulsiveness till her exaggeratedly free manner with visitors, even of the other sex, shocked those who witnessed it. She has been described by more than one observer as a boy in girl's clothes. She was affectionate in the extreme, intelligent, not devoid of culture, but her knowledge had neither unity nor solidity. Her temper was quick, and if she could show herself stubborn and intractable at times, the story of her engagement and of its rupture testifies to more wilfulness than will power [1]. Lady Rose Weigall [2] tells us that "the Princess Charlotte

[1] Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Regency*; Lady Charlotte Campbell's *Diary*; Brougham, *Memoirs of His Own Times*; Grand Duke Mikhailovitch, *Extrait des Mémoires de la Princesse Lieven*.

[2] Lady Rose Weigall was directed by Queen Victoria to write a biography of Princess Charlotte. Of all the official biographers who have dealt with the question of the intended marriage of Charlotte, Lady Rose Weigall is perhaps most responsible for obscuring the real issues involved. She had access to documents which have remained unpublished to this day, and her book has formed the main basis of the article on Princess Charlotte in the *D. N. B.* By perpetually quoting from letters written by the Princess, she has impressed most of the writers who approached the subject after her, and they have not realised that even with all the material at her disposal this official biographer might conceivably misunderstand her subject and err from beginning to end whenever she allowed her fancy to dwell upon questions of personality or motive. Her view that both the inception and the failure of the plan were due to purely personal motives is shared by the other "Court biographers", De Bas (*Prins Frederik der Nederlanden en zijn tijd*), J. Bosscha (*Het Leven van Willem den Tweede*), Stockmar (*Memoirs*). Stockmar was private secretary to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, and enjoyed the confidence of Princess Charlotte during her brief married life at Claremont.

was far less amenable to external pressure than the political newsmongers of the day imagined. The seclusion and coercion which were designed by her father to keep her childish, had prematurely ripened her faculties, and by depriving her of outward help, had sharpened her observation and strengthened her self-reliance. Moreover, if she had acted under advice, her opinions on the marriage would not have developed in so natural a way, and her acts and language more guarded" [1]. It would be difficult to imagine a less faithful portrait of Charlotte. From the autumn of 1813 to the summer of 1814 she was carried away by contradictory impulses and by outside influences. It is altogether impossible to find in her actions a logical sequence which would explain them in a satisfactory manner.

The Regent obtained Charlotte's consent by one of those sleight of hand tricks at which he excelled [2]. The Princess had been approached indirectly, and had professed the utmost disinclination towards the match. She had refused an invitation from Lord Liverpool merely because she feared she would meet the Hereditary Prince of Orange, and did not hide from Miss Knight, her attendant, that she disliked the idea of the marriage very considerably. There is some reason to believe that at this time she felt an inclination for her cousin, the Duke of Devonshire. A few days before the arrival of the Prince, at the beginning of December, her grandmother, Queen

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 97.

[2] Apart from the letters published in Lady Rose Weigall's biography, and those from the "Huisarchief" of the Dutch Royal family, published in *Ged.* VII, the best source for the story of the engagement is the *Autobiography* of Miss Cornelia Knight. Miss Knight was lady companion to the Princess Charlotte, a cultured and refined person (she was also a novelist and wrote a sequel to Johnson's *Rasselas*), patently honest, and always careful to distinguish between what she knew from her own observation, what she had been told by the main actors in the story, and what she had learned through less direct channels. Both Stockmar and Lady Rose Weigall render high testimony to her reliability.

Charlotte, showed her his portrait. Charlotte, when pressed, would say no more than that she "thought it not ugly". On the evening of the 12th, she was made to dine at Carlton House, her father's residence, with a small party, in order to meet the Hereditary Prince.

The young Prince was then in his twenty second year. He was intelligent, but superficial, his character was yet unformed, and he had the qualities that make an excellent company officer rather than a strategist: reckless personal courage, and more rapidity than solidity of judgment. His looks were not particularly striking. When he was not in the company which he preferred, that of young men of his own age, he was, at least at this period, rather shy and awkward. His better qualities were to come to the surface only later in life. There was nothing, in 1813, to mark him as the brilliant personality he was eventually to become.

Nothing had occurred up to that moment that would have pointed to a change of attitude in Charlotte, but the young Prince appeared in a new light, with the glorious news of the liberation of Holland still fresh in everybody's mind. He was placed by Charlotte's side, and "spoke very handsomely of the old liberties of Holland." The Regent, beaming over them from the head of the table, realised his opportunity, and when the meal was over, he took the young people apart into a room, walking up and down with them for a while. "Well," he suddenly whispered to Charlotte, "I suppose it will not do?" "I do not say that," was her reply, "I like his manner very well, as much as I have seen of it." Upon which the Regent, with a seemingly impulsive gesture, joined their hands into his!

Stockmar may well say that "a certain amount of artful precipitation had been exercised by the father." But there was no demur on the part of the Princess, who, on coming home late at night, informed Miss Knight that she was engaged [1]. In this instance, surely, Charlotte can scarcely be said to have proved that she was not

[1] Knight, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 266–7.

amenable to external pressure, and in the rest of the story she was to show herself no less vacillating and impulsive.

The question which was to prove such a considerable difficulty in the way of the proposed marriage cropped up at the second or third interview between Prince William and Princess Charlotte. The Regent and the Hereditary Prince came to Warwick House on December 14th, and while the Regent engaged Miss Knight in conversation, William and Charlotte retired into another room. Suddenly Charlotte burst into loud, hysterical sobs, and the Regent and Miss Knight discovered that her despair was caused by William's having told her that she would be expected to accompany him occasionally to the Continent. It may be surprising that Charlotte, who was far from happy in England, shrank from this prospect. But the way she was treated was bound to make her suspicious, and she had a high notion of the part she was to play in England as heiress to the throne. The thought that by her absence she might miss the opportunity of coming before the public eye as the future Queen of England must have been the main cause of her despair. We have an account of this interview from the Princess herself in a letter to her friend, Miss Mercer [1]. The Hereditary Prince acted in the straightest possible way. Asked by the Regent and the Ministers not to mention the question of sojourn, he refused, because he wanted Charlotte to be completely informed of all plans that were being made. He was on the point of leaving for Holland, and rather naturally told Charlotte that he expected and wished her to go with him when they were married. He wished her also to accompany him to Berlin, and to travel in different parts of Germany. Charlotte was "nearly cut to the heart," but the Prince showed such anxious desire to do what she liked as much as possible, and to study everything which could make her happy, that he succeeded in consoling her, and he undoubtedly convinced Charlotte that an occasional journey abroad lasting from six weeks to three months was not an unreasonable thing to ask of

[1] Dec. 15th 1813 (Weigall, *op. cit.*, pp. 80–81).

her. When she was Queen of England, she reflected, she would no longer be able to enjoy this advantage.

On the day after she had learned for the first time that she would occasionally have to leave England, Charlotte already saw this as not altogether a disadvantage. A week afterwards she had "completely altered her language as to the Prince of Orange" [1], and a month later she wrote to her friend that the Hereditary Prince would certainly have to go on active service, and "it is his own wish — and certainly in that case it would be mine — that I should go with him" [2]. But the communicative Charlotte seems to have taken care that even the slightest doubt should be removed as to the part she played in bringing forward the question of sojourn. In the month of February 1814 she wrote again to her confidante, saying that the Regent wanted to send her out of the country, that she herself did not want to leave, but realised that a time might come when she would like the Prince of Orange better than she did at present, and in that case was anxious that "no absolute prohibitions shall pass, so as wholly to prevent the possibility of my going, even if I wished it." She considered that such a situation might be extremely painful to her [3].

We can easily detect the idea at work in Charlotte's mind. The Hereditary Prince of Orange had arrived at The Hague on December 19th 1813. He had been received with enthusiasm, and made, as we have already seen, Commander-in-Chief and Inspector General of infantry, cavalry, and artillery. The English saw him as a hero, and Charlotte now felt flattered by the prospect of becoming his bride. But she had got it into her head that she could not leave the country without permission of Parliament. Already in her letter of December 12th she wrote about her going abroad: "This is a step which cannot be taken without consent of Parliament." But a fortnight later, she only "fancied" that this consent must

[1] Brougham, *Life*, II, pp. 17–89.
[2] Jan. 20th 1814 (Weigall, *op. cit.*, p. 85).
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.

be obtained [1]. Charlotte's notion was, of course, entirely erroneous. The Act of Settlement provided indeed that the successor to the Crown should not go abroad without consent of Parliament, but this clause was repealed in the first year of George I. The way in which this constitutional misapprehension became grafted upon an impulsive dislike to leave the country indicates sufficiently that it did not originate with Charlotte herself; but for the present it will suffice to follow it up in its effects on Charlotte's conduct.

In the letters she wrote to her fiancé, Princess Charlotte returned with growing insistence to the topic of her future residence. She told him that the voice of the country was decidedly against her going over to Holland, and the Hereditary Prince was so far from wishing to wean the Princess from her own country that he anxiously wrote to Lord Bathurst to ask him if this were true [2]. But Charlotte did not rely only upon her efforts to persuade her future husband. As the negotiations about the marriage contract were progressing, and the Dutch envoys came to ask officially for her hand, Charlotte addressed herself directly to the Regent, and gave him to understand that she would not allow herself to be taken out of the country against her own will. She refused to discuss the matter with the persons whom the Regent sent to her, but on April 25th she wrote to the Duke of York that she did not look forward to the rupture of the engagement, though she could not help it if this were to be the result of her decision. Apart from the Regent's unwillingness to give way to a daughter whose feelings or inclinations had never counted with him, there was also, of course, a reluctance on the part of the Dutch to agree to restrictions upon the sojourn in Holland of their future Princess. Van der Duyn wrote to the Sovereign Prince that the happiness of the future spouses required that they should reside in Holland as much as possible.

While the Regent and the Duke of York were trying to

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 85.
[2] April 24th. *Bathurst Papers*, p. 273.

raise side-issues, to prove that Princess Charlotte was heir presumptive and not heir apparent, and even to make out that the idea of the marriage had originated with her [1], the friends of the Hereditary Prince realised that the only way out of the deadlock was the intervention of the Hereditary Prince himself. Bathurst wrote to him that his immediate presence was necessary, as the best and only chance of overcoming the intrigues which had given rise to the misunderstanding. He suggested that the Prince should come over with despatches under the name of Colonel St. George [2]. This letter was written with the knowledge of the Duke of York and of two of Bathurst's Ministerial colleagues. On April 29th the Hereditary Prince arrived in London, and the following morning he called unexpectedly on the Princess, who assured him that her feelings were unaltered, but that she refused to see him again until the matter was settled. For some time the Princess corresponded with her fiancé without meeting him. She refused an interview with the Regent which William had arranged for her, and on May 3rd informed him that she demanded the insertion in the marriage contract of a security, sanctioned by Parliament, that she should never be removed or kept away from England. The Hereditary Prince answered that he had no objection, but asked if, the security being obtained, she would still refuse even occasionally to visit Holland. The next day, Charlotte replied that she could only fulfil the Prince's wishes as far as lay within her power. Her vagueness showed the uncertainty of her mind, which was by this time entirely dominated by outside influences.

Meanwhile, the intervention of the young Prince of Orange was bearing results. The Regent consented to the drawing up of two alternative versions for an additional clause to the marriage treaty [3]. In the first it was laid down that Charlotte would not be permitted to leave the country without authority given in writing on behalf

[1] Weigall, *op. cit.*, pp. 104 sqq.
[2] *Bathurst Papers*, p. 275.
[3] *Ged.* VII, pp. 56–23.

of the King, and that if she was abroad the same authority might direct her in writing to return. The Prince of Orange or the Government of the Netherlands was never to place any obstacle in the way of her return. In the event of her succeeding to the throne, she was not to leave the country without consent of Parliament. The second version stated that the Princess was not to leave the country without the permission of the Regent, and should in no case be absent from it more than a certain number of months in any one year. These two drafts were placed before Charlotte by Lord Liverpool on May 8th. She refused to discuse them orally, but on the following day she wrote to Liverpool that she considered neither proposal satisfactory. Liverpool immediately informed her that the Government was not prepared to advise any further concessions. Charlotte then wrote to the Hereditary Prince that she now considered the marriage plan to be at an end, "unless you have influence enough to make them alter their minds". The Hereditary Prince immediately asked for an interview with the Princess, saw her, and gathered the impression that she had no desire for a breach, provided she gained her point. She seems to have admitted that she never considered her reply to Liverpool as final, and that she was prepared for further negotiations [1]. There was another interview the next day, and the Hereditary Prince obtained from Charlotte the offer to accept an article laying down that she should never be obliged to leave the country without the joint consent of the Regent and of herself (May 12th).

These developments were not equally welcome to all the Prince's friends. Malmesbury was most indignant. "Let him go straight forward", he wrote to the Dutch Ambassador. "Let him press an early day for the wedding without agreeing to any terms. Subsequent events must settle this point". But the young Prince kept his head better than this seasoned adviser. He approached the Regent again, and put all his weight on the side of Charlotte. Mollified by Charlotte's partial retreat, the Regent

[1] Hereditary Prince to his father, May 10th (*Ged.* VII, p. 569).

raise side-issues, to prove that Princess Charlotte was heir presumptive and not heir apparent, and even to make out that the idea of the marriage had originated with her [1], the friends of the Hereditary Prince realised that the only way out of the deadlock was the intervention of the Hereditary Prince himself. Bathurst wrote to him that his immediate presence was necessary, as the best and only chance of overcoming the intrigues which had given rise to the misunderstanding. He suggested that the Prince should come over with despatches under the name of Colonel St. George [2]. This letter was written with the knowledge of the Duke of York and of two of Bathurst's Ministerial colleagues. On April 29th the Hereditary Prince arrived in London, and the following morning he called unexpectedly on the Princess, who assured him that her feelings were unaltered, but that she refused to see him again until the matter was settled. For some time the Princess corresponded with her fiancé without meeting him. She refused an interview with the Regent which William had arranged for her, and on May 3rd informed him that she demanded the insertion in the marriage contract of a security, sanctioned by Parliament, that she should never be removed or kept away from England. The Hereditary Prince answered that he had no objection, but asked if, the security being obtained, she would still refuse even occasionally to visit Holland. The next day, Charlotte replied that she could only fulfil the Prince's wishes as far as lay within her power. Her vagueness showed the uncertainty of her mind, which was by this time entirely dominated by outside influences.

Meanwhile, the intervention of the young Prince of Orange was bearing results. The Regent consented to the drawing up of two alternative versions for an additional clause to the marriage treaty [3]. In the first it was laid down that Charlotte would not be permitted to leave the country without authority given in writing on behalf

[1] Weigall, *op. cit.*, pp. 104 sqq.
[2] *Bathurst Papers*, p. 275.
[3] *Ged.* VII, pp. 56–23.

of the King, and that if she was abroad the same authority might direct her in writing to return. The Prince of Orange or the Government of the Netherlands was never to place any obstacle in the way of her return. In the event of her succeeding to the throne, she was not to leave the country without consent of Parliament. The second version stated that the Princess was not to leave the country without the permission of the Regent, and should in no case be absent from it more than a certain number of months in any one year. These two drafts were placed before Charlotte by Lord Liverpool on May 8th. She refused to discuse them orally, but on the following day she wrote to Liverpool that she considered neither proposal satisfactory. Liverpool immediately informed her that the Government was not prepared to advise any further concessions. Charlotte then wrote to the Hereditary Prince that she now considered the marriage plan to be at an end, "unless you have influence enough to make them alter their minds". The Hereditary Prince immediately asked for an interview with the Princess, saw her, and gathered the impression that she had no desire for a breach, provided she gained her point. She seems to have admitted that she never considered her reply to Liverpool as final, and that she was prepared for further negotiations [1]. There was another interview the next day, and the Hereditary Prince obtained from Charlotte the offer to accept an article laying down that she should never be obliged to leave the country without the joint consent of the Regent and of herself (May 12th).

These developments were not equally welcome to all the Prince's friends. Malmesbury was most indignant. "Let him go straight forward", he wrote to the Dutch Ambassador. "Let him press an early day for the wedding without agreeing to any terms. Subsequent events must settle this point". But the young Prince kept his head better than this seasoned adviser. He approached the Regent again, and put all his weight on the side of Charlotte. Mollified by Charlotte's partial retreat, the Regent

[1] Hereditary Prince to his father, May 10th (*Ged.* VII, p. 569).

not only accepted her conditions, but assured the Hereditary Prince that he would leave it entirely to him and to Charlotte to decide as to the time of their living in Holland and in England, "only hoping that some part of the time each year would be in England [1]". Even Malmesbury was pleased, and it now only remained for the Regent to execute an elegant retreat. He declared that he could not on his part propose to the Sovereign Prince a stipulation in the contract which might appear to him highly objectionable. But if the Sovereign Prince and his son signified their desire for such a condition, the Regent, rather than cause the negotiations to come to an unfavourable issue, would not oppose its insertion in the contract [2].

The Sovereign Prince had now to be approached carefully, for it was no easy matter to obtain from him a letter asking the Regent to consent to Charlotte's condition, since he approved of it no more than did the Regent. The Dutch Ambassador wrote, but the Hereditary Prince was so anxious that he added a letter of his own, which shows how thoroughly he had espoused Charlotte's point of view. "The destiny of my life and my future happiness depend on your reply", he wrote. An unfavourable reply, he continued, "would make me unhappy for life.... Charlotte's demand does not seem to me very extraordinary .... I think she is not wrong, and I cannot resent it if she places no confidence in him (the Regent), as he has spoiled everything by his lack of openness towards her [3]".

On May 28th the Sovereign Prince, who was then in Paris, wrote as his Ambassador and his son wanted him to write. He declared that he only asked for concessions because negotiations were already so far advanced that to draw back would cause an unpleasant sensation, although otherwise he would have been the first to advise the Regent to make a firm stand. Thus Charlotte won her point.

[1] Hereditary Prince to Bathurst, May 11th (*Bathurst Papers*, pp. 277–8).
[2] Liverpool to Fagel, May 16th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 580–1).
[3] May 17th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 578–9).

In so far as he wished to remove his daughter from the country where she might have become a centre of opposition, the Regent had suffered a defeat. But as his object remained that of establishing an union between the House of Hanover and the House of Orange, he still had reason to be satisfied. The Regent made one further attempt, by cajolery this time, to make Charlotte change her mind out of consideration for the Orange family. But when this proved of no avail, he arranged for an article to be drawn up, entirely in accordance with the wishes of the Princess, who on June 10th acceded to it in writing.

As soon as the Hereditary Prince had definitely adopted Charlotte's point of view, normal relations were again established between them. They met every day, the Princess behaved in a charming manner, and their talk was all of the arrangements they would make when they were married. On June 2nd, at a dinner at Carlton House, the Hereditary Prince told Charlotte: "You are in great beauty to-day", whereupon she replied: "You know I must do you credit now". No sooner, on another occasion, did she see the Dutch Minister than she asked him where the Prince was. These little details prove that Charlotte's mind was thoroughly relieved since the question of residence had been settled. The difficulties of April and May had left no ill-feeling. The Dutch Ambassador saw all obstacles levelled, and thought the signature of the treaty would soon follow. And the Sovereign Prince was expecting at any moment an invitation to proceed to London for the marriage.

D. — *The Rupture*

Yet, less than week after Charlotte had acceded to the additional article, the engagement was broken, and this time for good. On June 16th Charlotte wrote to the Hereditary Prince, informing him that she was still of the opinion the "duties and affections that reciprocally bind us to our respective countries render our marriage incompatible not only from motives of policy but of domestic

happiness [1]". "From recent circumstances that have occurred", Charlotte continued, "I am perfectly convinced my interest is materially connected with that of my Mother and that my residence out of this kingdom would be equally prejudicial to her interests as to my own". The first thing that will strike us when reading this letter is the re-introduction of the question of residence, a matter upon which it would seem that nothing remained to be said, so that the re-introduction of it savours of disingenuousness. But what must we make of the reference to "recent circumstances that have occurred?"

The allusion is clear enough: it refers to the exclusion of the Princess of Wales from the two drawing rooms of the Queen on June 2nd and June 8th. The Regent had informed his mother that he would under no circumstances be present in the same room as his wife, whereupon the Queen had informed her daughter-in-law that she could not be admitted. The Dutch Ambassador wrote to his brother that as a consequence the situation was still very delicate. But this had not prevented Charlotte from showing herself extremely pleasant to the Hereditary Prince on the day of the first drawing room, nor of acceding in writing to the additional article of the marriage contract two days after the second drawing room. Nor, if we consider the relation that existed between Charlotte and her mother, can we convince ourselves that Charlotte's feelings were genuinely hurt to such an extent that she would break her engagement on this account, if she had no other reason for doing so. Charlotte was not blind to her mother's defects. "My mother was bad", she once said to Stockmar, "but she would not have become as bad as she was if my father had not been infinitely worse [2]". And, although she visited her mother about once a week, she liked her better for her sharp criticism of the Regent than for her own attractions. It is a fact that the public enjoyed the thought that the two Princesses were tenderly devoted to one another. Popular prints showed them

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 149.
[2] Stockmar, *Memoirs*, I, p. 2.

meeting in Hyde Park and throwing themselves into one another's arms. But any stick was good enough for popular cartoonists to beat the Prince Regent. His unworthiness as a husband and as a father does not prove anything in favour of Princess Caroline as a wife or a mother. When a few years later, during her burlesque progress across the Continent, she received the news of the death of her daughter, she showed no emotion whatever. Her temperamental levity allowed no deep feeling. The better side of her nature had been blunted by suffering and humiliation. She neither felt nor commanded affection.

As the slights upon the Princess of Wales did not suddenly begin at this time, there would have been plenty of food for indignation months before the rupture of the engagement. It is not saying too much to suggest that Charlotte's unexpected championship of the cause of her mother, although it flattered Caroline in the first instance, caused her considerable annoyance after the first feeling of triumph had abated. Caroline had already planned a journey abroad, and wondered whether she would now be morally compelled to stay in order to stand by her daughter. The hesitation was brief, and in any case did not prevent the departure, which took place shortly afterwards.

E. — *The Russian Intrigue — Anglo-Russian Rivalry*

Contemporaries generally believed that the sister of the Emperor Alexander, the Grand Duchess Catherine of Oldenburg, had influenced the Princess Charlotte to withdraw her consent to the marriage, because she wanted the Hereditary Prince to marry a Russian Grand Duchess, while she perhaps had also a plan for a marriage between Princess Charlotte and one of the Russian Princes [1].

[1] The Regent, in a conversation with Miss Knight, accused Tatischeff, who had been appointed Russian Ambassador to Madrid, of caballing to marry Charlotte to a Russian Prince (Knight, I, p. 288). A German book, *The History of the Most Extraordinary Events of the European Courts in the years 1813-1815*, published anonymously at Leipzig, affirmed that the Grand Duchess had been specially sent over

Dr. Colenbrander has proved that no such alternative marriage plans can possibly have existed while Charlotte was engaged to the Hereditary Prince [1]. But the Russians had other motives for disliking an Anglo-Dutch royal marriage. To understand this we must examine the relations which existed between Great Britain and Russia at the end of the Napoleonic wars.

These relations were by no means cordial. While they were co-operating against Napoleon, England and Russia were divided by an intense economic and political rivalry. In 1813 and 1814 the Russian Court and the Russian nation were intensely jealous of Great Britain. It is true that the alliance with France had not been a success from the Russian point of view. The Continental blockade had resulted in an unfavourable trade balance and a considerable depreciation of the Russian currency. The Alliance was utterly unpopular [2]. But as soon as friendly relations with great Britain had been re-established by the treaty of Orebrö (1812) the new ally inherited all the ill will that had been reserved for the French during the preceding years. For Great Britain immediately appeared as the one country that was in the way of Russia's economic emancipation. Animated by the intense nationalism

to intrigue against the marriage. This book is mentioned by several contemporaries. Cf. also Buckingham, *Regency* (II, pp. 85 sqq), Huish, *Memoirs of George IV* (II, p. 184), Huish, *Memoirs of H. R. H. Princess Charlotte* (pp. 103–4), Lord Holland, *Further Memoirs of the Whig Party* (p. 198), Green, *Memoirs of Charlotte Augusta* (pp. 168–170). Castlereagh seems to have asked Clancarty whether he had discovered any traces of a Russian intrigue. This letter has not been preserved. Clancarty replied on June 28th1814: "I have always suspected the existence of the fact (though not the motive by which it is supposed to be excited) alluded to by you" (*Ged.* VII, p. 156). Malmesbury wrote to H. Fagel on July 1st about "the highly unbecoming interference of certain great people, now I trust gone never to see our shores again" (*Ged.* VII, pp. 156–7). In diplomatic circles in Vienna it was also believed that Catherine had plotted against the marriage (Bernstorf to Rosencranz, Fournier, *Geheimpolizei*, p. 99 and Weill, *Les Dessous du Congrès de Vienne*, p. 26).

[1] Colenbrander, *Vestiging*, pp. 193 sqq. Webster (*Camb. Hist. Brit. For.Pol.*, I, p. 460) is inclined to credit the theory of a Russian intrigue.

[2] A. Kornilov, "The Napoleonic Wars and Later Russian History", in *The Russian Review*, Nov. 1912.

which at that period existed throughout Russia, her rulers wanted to make her entirely self-supporting, possessed of a strong mercantile fleet and of modern industrial equipment. On October 19th 1813 an article appeared in the official paper *Le Moniteur Impérial* pointing out that Peter the Great had been solicitous of establishing new manufactures and of freeing Russian industry from the foreign yoke. Alexander, said the paper, was now following the same policy. This article had been sent to the paper by the Minister for Home Affairs, Romantzoff, with an order for its verbatim insertion. It was a programme and a challenge, and as such drew much attention in England [1]. But it was only an open avowal of what had been systematically done ever since the peace of Orebrö. England, the principal trading country in the world, was naturally the first obstacle in the way of complete commercial emancipation, and for this reason she was singled out for the particular envy of the commercial nationalists of Russia. Goods in British ships were sometimes refused entry into Russia because their bills of lading were made to order without naming the consignee, while in similar circumstances goods in American and Brazilian ships were admitted without difficulty [2]. American ships were systematically favoured [3]. Advantages granted to the subjects of other nations were sometimes withheld from those of Great Britain [4], while in numerous instances the goods of British merchants were confiscated [5].

Many difficulties were placed in the way of foreign merchants; the "foreign guests", i.e. the non-naturalised foreign merchants, were obliged to confine their trade within the precincts of the town they inhabited, and had

[1] Consul Bayley to the Foreign Office, Oct. 20th 1813 (*F. O. Russia*. 88).

[2] Cathcart to Castlereagh, Sept. 25th 1813 (*F. O. Russia*, 87).

[3] Two American ships were placed under the Russian flag although they had not been built in Russia. (Bayley to Foreign Office, March 22nd 1814 (*F. O. Russia*, 93).

[4] Castlereagh to Cathcart, Aug. 23rd 1813 (*F. O. Russia*, 83)..

[5] Report of Consul General Bayley in Petersburg, 1813 (*F. O. Russia*, 91).

to show their books to the *Duma* of the town [1]. At the end of 1813 a clause from the manifesto of 1807, which had not been applied even while Russia was at war with England, was suddenly enforced against the English brokers in Petersburg. It tended to make it impossible for them to carry on their trade without becoming Russian subjects [2]. At the beginning of 1814 an attempt was made to restrict them even more severely by making it permissible for "foreign guests" to sell their imports only to Russian merchants belonging to the first-class guilds [3]. Other "foreign guests" were readier to renounce their nationality than the British, who therefore were more particularly hit by these regulations.

The British, who wished to obtain most favoured nation treatment [4], naturally resented these invidious distinctions. In November 1813 Castlereagh complained that British commerce was in a state of proscription, and that the existing tariff was hardly distinguishable from the continental system [5]. The situation was so unsatisfactory that when the British Ambassador Cathcart had to follow the Emperor Alexander to the theatre of war, the Foreign Office decided to appoint Lord Walpole, who was Secretary of Embassy at Petersburg, as Minister Plenipotentiary during the Ambassador's absence. His particular task was "to keep up British influence in the public and court of St. Petersburg, as far as regards our commercial interests". In announcing this decision to Cathcart [6], Castlereagh expressed the hope that the presence of a British Minister might tend to check the party prejudices and intrigues "of those who are ill disposed to all connection whatever between Great Britain and Russia". While Walpole was doing what he could in Petersburg, Cathcart, who continually received complaints

[1] Memorial on trade relations with Russia by a British resident in Russia, called Grant (Second half of 1814, *F. O. Russia*, 97).
[2] Walpole to Foreign Office, Dec. 17th 1813 (*F. O. Russia*, 88).
[3] Bayley's Report to Walpole, Feb. 14th 1814 (*F. O. Russia*, 94).
[4] Castlereagh to Cathcart, Sept. 18th 1813 (*F. O. Russia*, 83).
[5] To Cathcart (*F. O. Supplementary, Russia*, 343).
[6] July 13th and 27th 1813 (*F. O. Russia*, 83).

from Great Britain and instructions to request from the Emperor a modification of the existing tariffs, was neither apt for such negotiations nor interested in them. He wrote home assurances that he was doing what he could to change the Emperor's mind, and added explanations which showed how little he understood the situation. "There is a great dread of the ascendency of the English among several German merchants, and they play a deep game", he announced to Castlereagh [1]. He came a little nearer the truth when he wrote that there was a high tariff and a low tariff party, and that the jealousy of British commerce which had been fostered by the French still existed [2].

Neither Cathcart nor Walpole succeeded in obtaining any alteration of the anti-British trade policy in the course of 1814. In July the tariff of 1811 was renewed, the reason given being that the Russian merchants had written to the Emperor that they had still so many colonial products on their hands [3]. In August a Navigation Act limiting the quantity of foreign shipping admissible to Russia was seriously contemplated and the draft ukase, which was sent to England by Walpole, clearly displayed the jealousy felt in Russia towards Great Britain [4]. Throughout the months during which Princess Charlotte became engaged and, after many vicissitudes, broke off her engagement, the economic relations between Great Britain and Russia were definitely unfriendly. For Great Britain too followed policies which were not calculated

[1] Sept. 25th 1813 (*F. O. Supp. Russia* 343).
[2] To Castlereagh, Jan 29th 1814 (*ibid.*).
[3] *F. O. Russia* 94.
[4] Walpole to Castlereagh, Aug. 20th 1814 (*F. O. Russia* 94). "Russia, from whatever cause, shows the strongest spirit of hostility against our trade", wrote Vansittart in a memorandum about the Polish question in Oct. 1814 (Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 221). No improvement appeared during the first half of 1815, and Consul General Bayley was called to England, in May 1815, in order to inform the British Government about the situation (*F. O. Russia* 99). Only about the middle of the year did Russia decide to adopt a different policy, and a new tariff was announced for the autumn, which would satisfy the British nation by giving up the principle of protection (Nesselrode to Lieven, June 17th 1815. *F. O. Russia* 100).

to endear her to the Russians. The British did all they could to prevent the export of machinery and of skilled labourers which the Russians badly wanted in order to start the industries they wished to build up [1]. Meanwhile the British doctrine of the right of search and blockade was irritating the Russians, and Lieven was complaining all through 1813 about Russian ships which had gone from England to America before the blockade and were unable to return [2].

In such ungrateful earth amicable political relations could not grow. But even a better soil would have given them little chance of flourishing. For Russia, who had her own conception of the balance of power, was not inclined to allow any Western country to acquire a preponderant position on the Continent. Even before Napoleon had disappeared from the scene as a candidate for European hegemony, the Russians openly avowed their fear that Britain might become his successor. In October 1812, when Napoleon decided to retreat from Russia, the Allied representatives, among them the British General Wilson, tried to persuade the Russian Commander Kutusoff to fight a decesive battle. But Kutusoff declared that he was not convinced that the complete destruction of Napoleon and his army would really benefit the world. The heritage of the French Empire, he feared, might fall not to Russia, but to Great Britain [3]. At the Russian

[1] On Dec. 11th 1813 Walpole warned the Foreign Office that an Englishman named Wilson, who was director of a cotton factory in Russia, was going to England in order to buy machinery and to get workmen. "You must frustrate his plan", wrote Walpole (*F. O. Russia*, 88). "All your hints as to machinery will be attended to", replied Cooke of the Foreign Office on April 22nd 1814 (*F. O. Russia* 94). Consul Bayley reported in 1813 (*F. O. Russia* 91) on efforts made in England to smuggle machines out to Russia, and again, on March 22nd 1814, he reported on an Englishman, the Reverend Arthur Young, a landowner in the Crimea, who had gone to buy machinery in England, and to get workmen from the Wedgwood works at Etruria (*F. O. Russia* 93). [2] *F. O. Russia* 89.

[3] Stschepkin, in *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, IX, p. 499. The idea that Great Britain and France should neutralise one another had been held by Russians at least since the beginning of the reign of Alexander. See, for the views of Kotschubey, one of Alexander's friends at that period, Shafik Ghorbal, *The Beginnings of the Egyptian Question*, p. 144.

court, in 1813, there reigned a tone of biting criticism towards the British ally. "Most of the Ministers of State, and of those who surround the person of the Emperor, are hostile to the strict union which formerly subsisted between Great Britain and Russia", wrote Walpole at the end of the year. The head of the anti-British faction was the Chancellor Count Romantzoff, whose attitude was sometimes hardly compatible with the conception of loyalty towards an ally. When war was declared against Denmark, he suffered the Danish Minister Blöme to remain in Petersburg, where, assisted by the plenipotentiaries from the United States, he actively worked against Great Britain [1].

After the first peace of Paris, in June 1814, the Russian Emperor paid a visit to England. Alexander treated the members of the Opposition with marked courtesy, while, noticing the manifest unpopularity of the Regent, he did not deem it worth while to cultivate his friendship [2]. Although they enjoyed the hospitality of the English very much, Alexander and his *entourage* left the country "jealous of her industry, cultivation, and comforts [3]." Henceforth, the envy and ill will felt towards Great Britain by the leading personalities in Russia became more outspoken than before. "The language of those who are in the habit of approaching His Imperial Majesty is most abusive of Great Britain", reported Walpole at the beginning of 1815 [4]. The Austrian official Von Gentz, nearly two years later, noted Alexander's intense animosity against the British [5].

In view of these feelings it will not appear surprising

[1] Walpole to Castlereagh, Dec. 1st. 1813 (*F. O. Russia* 88).

[2] Lord Holland, *Further Memoirs of the Whig Party*, pp. 197–9.

[3] Walpole to Cooke, from Petersburg, July 19th 1814 (*F. O. Russia* 94). On Aug. 21st Walpole wrote to Castlereagh that the visit to England had done some harm and had caused jealousy of England's superiority (*ibid.*). Braun, Minister of Hesse-Darmstadt, in Vienna, July 16th 1814: "It is said here that Alexander is dissatisfied from every point of view with his stay in England" (Weil, *Dessous du Congrès de Vienne*, I. p. 25).

[4] To Castlereagh, Jan 30th 1815 (*F. O. Russia* 98).

[5] Von Gentz, *Dépêches Inédites*, Sept. 13th 1816 (I, pp. 264–6).

that the influence acquired by Great Britain in the Netherlands did not please the Russians. By the spring of 1814 it was known that Holland would acquire an increase of territory, and that she would recover part at least of her colonial empire. Tied to Great Britain, not only by gratitude, but by a matrimonial alliance, she would naturally strengthen the influence of Russia's rival on the Continent. We have proof that such fears existed, and that they existed precisely in the mind of the Grand Duchess Catherine, who has been accused by contemporaries of causing the rupture of Charlotte's engagement. Catherine was the favourite sister of Alexander, who had no secrets from her. At the time she made the acquaintance of Princess Charlotte she was twenty five years of age, and already a widow, her husband Prince George of Oldenburg having died in 1812. Princess Lieven, the wife of the Russian Ambassador in London, wrote about her, "Je n'ai jamais vu une femme possedée à ce degré du besoin de se remuer, d'agir, de paraître, et d'effacer les autres". She was, as an Italian said of her, "donna di spirito e molto remuante [1]". Her correspondence with Alexander [2] shows the interest she took in affairs of state and the extent to which she shared her brother's views.

Catherine went to England in the spring of 1814, and, passing through Holland on her way, was greatly struck by the country. Apart from England, which she did not know, she felt sure that no other country would please Alexander as much. Holland was a triumph of industry and intelligence, everything was clean and pretty. In a letter to Alexander written from Rotterdam she gave enthusiastic descriptions of Amsterdam and of the countryside. Here, she felt, was something worthy of Russia's attention. "In choosing Holland as the model for Russia's regeneration, Peter I gave another proof of his genius. Germany does not compare with it: it is the country whence we can draw the

[1] The Italian Colonel Count Marco San Fermo (Weil, *op. cit.*, I, p. 231).

[2] Mikhailovitch, *Correspondance de l'Empereur Alexandre Ier avec sa soeur la Grande Duchesse Catherine* (1805–1818), from which the extracts quoted in the text are taken.

largest number of inventions applicable to our local conditions and to the minds of our people." But her pleasure was marred by the British influence which was visible everywhere. "At this moment Holland seems an English colony; the marriage with the Princess Charlotte and the subsidies of all kinds that country affords being to their delight, Anglomania is the order of the day. Without doubt the alliance is extremely advantageous to Holland, but not less so to England, for it is a splendid province and a firm footing on the mainland [1]".

Such were the feelings which animated Catherine on her arrival in London on March 30th. Her first impressions were not unfavourable [2]. But no sooner did she meet the Regent than all her feelings of antagonism were roused. "Though handsome", she wrote to her brother, "he is visibly worn out by debauchery, and rather disgusting.. His boasted affability is in the most licentious and even obscene strain". The fact that the Regent and the Grand Duchess made a bad impression upon one another was noticed by Princess Lieven, wife of the Russian Ambassador, who was well situated to observe the activities of the Grand Duchess, and met her almost every day during her sojourn in London [3].

The first result of Catherine's dislike for the Regent was that, as Princess Lieven noted in her diary, she displayed a marked friendliness towards the members of the Opposition, while she showed none towards the Ministers. At last she decided to make the acquaintance of the Princess of Wales, which would have meant a complete breach with the Regent. As representative of Alexander, Lieven felt compelled to oppose this plan, and this caused a cooling off on the part of the Grand Duchess towards Lieven

[1] Catherine to Alexander, Mar. 6th 1814 (Mikhailovitch, p. 174).

[2] She was struck by the genuineness of the friendship felt by the people for herself and for her brother (To Alexander, March 30th). Alexander, she found, was more appreciated and understood in England than anywhere else. (To the same, April 4th). Catherine remained in England till June 27th, when she embarked with the Russian Emperor and the King of Prussia (*Annual Register*).

[3] *Extraits des Mémoires de la Princesse Lieven, Londres en 1814*, published as an Appendix to Mikhailovitch's *Correspondance*.

and his wife. Meanwhile, Catherine had become acquainted with the Princess Charlotte, and was very frequently in her company [1]. That Princess Charlotte would talk of her marriage is obvious, and that the Grand Duchess could not warmly support a scheme which would strengthen the position of Great Britain in Holland, and which agreed with the desires of the Regent is not less obvious. The Regent distrusted the Grand Duchess's influence upon his daughter; he desired Miss Knight to keep the Princess from going too often to the Grand Duchess. But the governess could not prevent the Grand Duchess from calling on her charge. Catherine had ample opportunities for influencing Charlotte, who was unusually open to persuasion. If we take into account Catherine's familiarity with the members of the Opposition, and the attitude of these politicians towards the marriage scheme, which we shall examine in the next part of this chapter, we shall realise that there was no inducement to prevent the Grand Duchess from making use to the full of the opportunities she had acquired for making mischief. Princess Lieven definitely tells us that Catherine influenced Princess Charlotte against the marriage, and we have no reason to doubt the word of this keen sighted and unusually well situated witness [2].

F. — *Brougham, his Colleagues of the Opposition, and the Marriage Plan*

The Grand Duchess might not, by herself, have been successful in preventing the marriage of Princess Charlotte with the Hereditary Prince of Orange. But there were other people equally interested in influencing the

[1] See, for instance, *Annual Register*, April 20th 1814; Miss Berry's *Journal*, May 23rd (III, p. 23); Mikhailovitch (*op. cit.*, *passim*); and especially Miss Knight, I, pp. 281–2.

[2] "En même temps qu'elle refusait des maris, la Grande Duchesse prenait quelque plaisir à les enlever aux autres. On a beaucoup dit et cru à Londres que son but en décidant la Princesse Charlotte à rompre avec le Prince d'Orange avait été de se le réserver à elle-même". (*Diary*, in Mikhailovitch, *op. cit.*).

Princess and in obstructing the Regent's plans. They were a group of members of the Opposition, and the most active among them was Brougham, who, since 1809, had been the confidential adviser of Charlotte's mother, the Princess of Wales. Brougham has related in his autobiography the part he played in this affair. It is thoroughly consonant with what we know of him as an unprincipled self-seeker, and, if his testimony should always be taken with some caution, it is, in this case, sufficiently corroborated.

Reasons for the campaign of the Opposition against the proposed marriage are not difficult to find. Their strong antagonism against the Regent, who had disappointed their hopes of office, always tempted them to place difficulties in the path of their erstwhile confederate. But apart from motives of feeling, there was a stronger reason for intervention. More than once, the heir to the throne had been the rallying point of the Opposition. This had been the case when George II was King; while the Regent himself had been the leader of the enemies of his father's Ministers. In 1813 the Opposition members were looking hopefully towards Princess Charlotte, and they were very disappointed at the prospect of her leaving the country. Brougham and his friends did not set out with the definite purpose of preventing the marriage: they only wanted to make sure that the Princess should not be taken away from the country.

No more than on any other matter of policy was there unanimity among the Opposition about the marriage [1]. The Opposition leaders considered that the future residence of Princess Charlotte ought to be discussed in Parliament. Grey, with whom Brougham was corresponding most assiduously on the subject during the month of March 1814, wanted a stipulation that England should remain the chief residence of the Princess; but he judged

[1] Brougham described their attitude in a letter to Lady Charlotte Lindsay, a friend of the Princess of Wales (Brougham, *Life*, II, pp. 189–190). The letter is undated but must have been written before the middle of March 1814.

that every measure of conciliation ought to be tried before resort was taken to Parliamentary action, because he feared that with its usual servility Parliament might not insist on sufficient concessions [1]. Although the Grenvilles and Holland House were disinclined to assist in the campaign, because they disliked the Princess of Wales and did not wish to offend the Regent, Brougham hoped to bring them round to his point of view by playing on their fears of a Wellington Government in case the Hereditary Prince became Consort. Plunkett was strongly with Brougham, who also relied upon the assistance and legal advice of Lord Thanet and Lord Erskine. Princess Charlotte has definitely asserted that she was not influenced in her decision by the members of the Opposition [2], but there is abundant proof that she was in continual contact with Brougham and that other members of the Opposition also advised her. Once a week, during the time that she was engaged, Charlotte dined with her mother, who was, as we know, on confidential terms with Brougham. Through various intermediaries, Charlotte consulted him about her difficulties with her father [3], and there was a constant correspondence between them, chiefly through Lady Charlotte Lindsay.

We must remember that, as far as can be established, Charlotte's dislike of the idea of going abroad was genuine and not due to outside influence. On December 14th 1813, she showed herself very distressed when the Hereditary Prince mentioned foreign travel. But the next day she was already less upset, a week later she thought the objection less insuperable, and on January 20th 1814 it had become her wish to accompany the Prince. These were still her feelings in February, when she even imagined that legal steps might be taken to prevent her leaving the country [4]. Brougham, however, was not so easily reconciled to the idea of the Princess's going abroad. We

[1] Grey to Brougham, March 7th 1814 (Brougham, *Life*, II, p. 200).
[2] Lady Rose Weigall, *Princess Charlotte*, p. 104.
[3] Brougham, *Life*, II, p. 180.
[4] Above, p. 174.

may accept the view that Charlotte consulted him first. He realised that there was no law to prevent the heir apparent from leaving the country, but he thought that Parliament might interfere by expressing an objection against placing the Princess under the influence of an alien who could not be compelled, under the laws of his own country, to let her return to England [1]. Brougham tells us that he gave full information about her legal position to Charlotte, that he gave her historical precedents "from Philip and Mary downwards", and that he communicated to her the substance of an article he had drawn up for the *Edinburgh Review*, as well as a pamphlet written by George Lamb on the positon and rights of the Queen Consort. But as he gives no copies of his letters, we are left to guess how full the details he gave really may have been. In December he had apparently not told Charlotte that there was no legal objection to her leaving the country [2]. Did he ever lay all his cards on the table? He did not do so when, in 1820, he deliberately withheld from the Princess of Wales the details of his financial negotiations with the Government on her behalf. His latest biographer speaks of "the tortuousness of his conduct" on that occasion [3]. Is it certain that in 1814 Brougham's conduct was less tortuous?

It became useful, in any case, not to rely too much upon legal texts and to persuade the Princess that public opinion disliked the idea of her leaving the country. In April, therefore, the Opposition papers began to discuss the question of her future residence. The *Morning Chronicle* touched upon the subject several times, and on the 22nd it published a long article giving weighty arguments against the idea that the heiress of the Crown of Great Britain should follow the residence of the heir of the Dutch Sovereignty [4]. It is interesting to note that precisely at that time Charlotte had told her fiancé that the voice of

[1] Brougham, to Grey, March 12th and 15th (*Life*, II, pp. 197–8). The same to the same, March 17th (*ibid.*, pp. 203–4).
[2] Above, p. 174–5.
[3] A. Aspinall, *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party*, p. 103.
[4] *Ged.*, VII, p. 542.

the country was decidedly against her going to Holland [1]. Brougham's campaign was proceeding to his complete satisfaction. Unhappily, he had reckoned without the Hereditary Prince, who, determined to marry Charlotte, and dissatisfied with the conduct of her father, was giving her his wholehearted support. At the end of May, as we have seen, the relations between the two young Princes were again completely cordial, and the plotters appeared to be defeated. Those members of the Opposition who desired no more than to prevent the Princess from being kept abroad were satisfied. This appears from the conduct of the Duke of Sussex, who, according to Castlereagh, had played a prominent part in instigating Charlotte to resist [2]. Some time before, he had approached the Dutch negotiator Van der Duyn, and told him, in the obvious intention that his words should be repeated to the Sovereign Prince, that absence, even temporary, might have the gravest results upon the position of Princess Charlotte [3]. When the question of the future residence was settled to Charlotte's complete satisfaction, moderate people like Sussex, the Grenvilles, and Lord Holland considered the matter to be closed. But Brougham was not content with this. Emboldened by his earlier success, he decided to strike a final blow, and to make sure, once and for all, of the continued presence of Princess Charlotte in the country. Creevey, a member of the Opposition, tells how Brougham succeeded in making Charlotte break the engagement six days only after she had accepted the additional article to the marriage contract:

"Whitbread has formal authority from young Prinny to state that the marriage is broken off, and that the reasons are — first, her attachment to this country which she cannot and will not leave; and above all, her

[1] Above, p. 175.

[2] H. Fagel to Sovereign Prince of Orange, July 22nd 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 649–50). We may also note Castlereagh's opinion that "there can be no doubt that faction had been busy to work upon the Princess Charlotte's mind". (To Clancarty, June 26th, 1814 (*ibid.*, pp. 162–3).

[3] Van der Duyn to Sovereign Prince, Apr. 22nd and 26th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 540–41).

attachment to her mother, whom in her present distressed situation she likewise cannot leave.

"This is, in short, her letter to the Prince of Orange in taking leave of him, and a copy of this letter is in Whitbread's possession. What think you of the effect of this upon the British public?

"Since writing the last sentence Whitbread has shown me Princess Charlotte's letter to the Prince of Orange. By God! It is capital. And now what do you suppose has produced this sudden attachment to her mother? It arises from the profound resources of old Brougham, and is, in truth, one of the most brilliant movements in his campaign. He tells me he has had direct intercourse with the young one, that he has impressed upon her this fact that, if her mother goes away from England, as she is always threatening to do from her ill usage in this country, that then a divorce will inevitably take place, a second marriage follow, and thus the young Princess's title to the throne be gone. This has had an effect upon the young one almost magical" [1].

Creevey's letter also establishes different subsidiary points. We learn from it that Whitbread communicated with Princess Charlotte and discussed her marriage with her. We see moreover that Brougham had a personal motive for wishing the marriage not to take place. As Mr. Aspinall remarks [2], if Charlotte left England the Princess of Wales would have no reason for remaining in the country. This would be little short of a disaster for Brougham, who would lose his hold on the Princess of Wales and would no longer be able to make political capital out of her. This scheme, however, entirely miscarried, for a few weeks later Charlotte's mother left all the same for the Continent.

Although both the Dutch and the British governments tried to hush the matter up [3], the news of the failure of the

[1] Creevey to his step-daughter, June 21st 1814 (*Creevey Papers*, I, pp. 197–8). "Young Prinny" is Princess Charlotte. See also Dudley, *Letters to Ivy*, p. 249.

[2] *Op. Cit.*, p. 102.

[3] Sovereign Prince to Van Nagell, June 21st 1814, *Ged.* VII, p. 608.

matrimonial plan became known very soon. In Holland it was received with much regret, and the public funds fell 1 per cent.; while in the Southern Netherlands, where so much importance was attached to the connection with Great Britain, it occasioned considerable dismay [1]. The Regent and the British Government expressed their deepest regret to the Sovereign Prince and to the Dutch Government. Nor did they immediately give up all hope that Charlotte might yet be prevailed upon to alter her decision. In order to show the world at large that relations between Great Britain and the Netherlands were not less cordial than before, it was decided to confer the order of the Garter upon the Sovereign Prince and the order of the Bath upon the Hereditary Prince [2]. Clancarty, however, was less sanguine than the Dutch about the possibility of renewing the negotiations. "For myself", he wrote to Castlereagh, "not conceiving the motive alleged has been the real ground upon which the negotiation has broken off, I am not sanguine".

Charlotte's official biographer, Lady Rose Weigall, asserts that the Prince of Orange was hardly more ready than Princess Charlotte to renew the engagement [3]. As usual she is mistaken. On June 28th the Dutch Foreign Minister informed Clancarty that the Sovereign Prince was prepared for almost any sacrifice in order to satisfy Charlotte [4]. In the beginning of August both he and his son told Vincent, the Austrian Governor of the Southern Netherlands, that they were still very desirous of renewing the negotiations for the marriage, and they agreed to Vincent's proposal to inform his court and Merveldt, the Austrian Ambassador in London, of their views [5]. Merveldt actually spoke to the Regent and even to

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, July 1-2 1814 (*Ged.*, VII, p. 158) Johnson to Castlereagh, from Brussels, July 4th 1814 (*F. O. Austria*, 111).
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[3] Weigall, p. 134.
[4] Clancarty to Castlereagh, June 28th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 154-5).
[5] Vincent to Merveldt, Aug 2nd, 1814. Copy of this letter sent by Merveldt to Foreign Office, in *F. O. Austria*, 113.

Charlotte's friend, Miss Mercer [1]. Meanwhile, the Sovereign Prince seems also to have thought of the possibility of his second son, Frederic, taking the place of the Hereditary Prince, and in August Prince Frederic came over to England [2]. As late as the end of February 1815 the Sovereign Prince was devising ways of re-opening the question by further concessions [3]. But by that time Charlotte had already met Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg, whom she married on May 2nd 1816. Malmesbury, who played the part of a Greek chorus to the Orange family, had reflected long before that it was the intervention of the Prince's good genius which had induced Princess Charlotte to write her letter of dismissal [4].

There were rumours of a marriage between the Hereditary Prince and an Austrian Archduchess, and Merveldt seems to have mentioned this possibility to Henry Fagel [5]. The Austrians may have considered the possibility: it is a fact that in December 1814 they appointed the Hereditary Prince Field Marshal in their army. It was, however, a Russian marriage which eventually replaced the intended English marriage.

In 1814, the Emperor Alexander had wished to marry his sister Anne to the Duc de Berry, nephew of Louis XVIII. But the plan did not materialise owing to religious and other difficulties. It is the existence of this plan which has led some writers to believe that a Russian intrigue against the Anglo-Dutch marriage cannot have taken place. We have seen, however, that the Russians had good reason for wishing such a marriage not to take place, quite apart from any matrimonial plans they may have had. When, however, the work of Catherine and her friends of the Opposition had culminated in success, Alexander judged that a match between the Hereditary

[1] H. Fagel to Sovereign Prince, Dec. 30th 1814 (*Ged.*VII, pp. 715-7.
[2] Clancarty to Bathurst, July 26th 1814 (*Bathurst Papers*, p. 281. See also *Ged.* VII, pp. 166, 662-3).
[3] *Ged.* VII, p. 225.
[4] Malmesbury to H. Fagel, July 25th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 165).
[5] H. Fagel to Sovereign Prince, July 8th (*Ged.* VII, p. 630). Cf. also Weil, *op. cit.*, (I, p. 715), and *Ged.* VII, pp. 638, 649-50, 715.

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Prince and Anne might crown the work of his other sister. In July 1814, accompanied by the Hereditary Prince, he visited Rotterdam, The Hague, and Amsterdam, and made a pilgrimage to Zaandam, where he visited the relics of his great ancestor Peter. Clancarty was at once alive to the possibility that the Emperor might wish to marry the Hereditary Prince to his sister, and told Castlereagh that he would do his best to prevent this connection by pointing to "all the evils of a Russian alliance as applied to this country, and as contrasted with that of England" [1]. The Ambassador's concern sufficiently shows the importance attached to Russia's endeavours to gain a foothold in the Netherlands.

Clancarty's suspicions were justified. The Emperor kept up a faithful correspondence with the Prince, and invited him to Petersburg. It is interesting to note how keenly, in the course of 1815, the British were canvassing the amount of influence Russia was likely to acquire in Holland as a result of the marriage, which eventually took place in 1816. The news was of course communicated at an early date, with due protestations of friendship, to the British Government [2]. It was received with many expressions of regret by the British newspapers. By that time, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, the policy of the Sovereign Prince had already taken a less exclusively British orientation.

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[1] July 2nd 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 158).
[2] James to Castlereagh, Aug. 25th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 264–6).

CHAPTER IV

THE EXTENSION OF DUTCH TERRITORY

A. Great Britain favours a Modest Extension which will give Antwerp to Holland
B. Castlereagh on the Continent. Great Britain favours a larger Extension
C. The Population of the Southern Netherlands and the Plans of the Allies
D. The Peace of Paris France once more a Factor in European Diplomacy
E. The Sovereign Prince tries to act Independently

A. — *Great Britain favours a Modest Extension which will give Antwerp to Holland*

Holland regained its independence as a result of a happy conjuncture of circumstances which left the efforts made on her behalf by British diplomacy in the course of 1813 hanging in the air. A similar fate befell the policy of Britain towards the House of Orange. The Marriage plan, which was at the same time to link together the ruling houses of England and of Holland, to enhance the prestige of Orange in Holland, and to obtain for Holland the goodwill which, willingly or reluctantly, the Allied Courts would have to show towards England, failed. But the mutual friendliness between Hanover and Orange, at least until the end of the Congress of Vienna, remained unaffected by the caprice of Princess Charlotte. The fatigue and the lack of political interest of theDutch nation did more towards strengthening the House of Orange in Holland than the most brilliant matrimonial union could

have done, and the marriage plan was kept alive, even after it had in fact come to nothing, long enough to maintain the Oranges before the eyes of Europe as friends and potentially closer relations of the Royal House of England.

The favourable atmosphere thus created, partly by design, and partly by accident, continued to make it worth while and possible for England to persist in her endeavour to obtain for Holland the extension of territory which was to strengthen it sufficiently for its task as guardian — or partner at least in the custody — of the barrier against France. The extension of territory which eventually led to the creation of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands was the result of British diplomatic activity during the years 1814 and 1815.

It may be affirmed without hesitation that if British diplomacy had not played a predominant part in the European settlement, William of Orange would never have become King of the Netherlands. The Union between the Northern and Southern Netherlands took place in face of France's hostility, Prussia's increasing unfriendliness, Austria's indifference, and the reluctance of nearly every Dutchman and Belgian. It was obtained by the tenacious efforts of William of Orange and a few of his faithful ministers and supporters, and if it did not satisfy their growing ambitions, it gave them, nevertheless, far more than they would have dared to hope for at the beginning of 1813.

It is because the British wanted it that the Dutch obtained an increase of territory in the Southern Netherlands. If the increase was not more considerable, the reason was that in Great Britain's interest a portion of the Southern Netherlands had to be utilised in order to satisfy other claimants to the spoils of war. This interest happens to have been rather useful to Europe, in so far as it consisted in building a European system which was to ensure peace, or at least security, to a few generations. However this may be, the fate of the Southern Netherlands during the years 1814 and 1815 was closely linked

up with the fluctuations of British diplomatic strategy.

The uncertainties of British policy in this respect were not only due to the continually varying aspect of the European situation in 1814 and 1815, which often necessitated the use of these territories as a mere pawn in a bigger game. British policy was also drawn hither and thither by the fact that the problem of the Netherlands had to be en visaged from so many different angles. There was, to begin with, the question of the shore of the Low Countries. If it was highly desirable that France should not remain in possession of the whole of that coastline, this did not necessarily mean that peace was unthinkable before the whole coastline had been wrenched from the French. Holland was more distant from the centre of French defence, and, her independence being a fact established in European tradition, it was easier to obtain the agreement of the Continental Allies not to accept peace terms which did not recognise it. Once this had become a reality, the French would at least no longer be in undivided possession of the coastline.

To a conceivable acquiescence on the part of Great Britain in the possession of the Southern Netherlands by France there was, however, one important reservation. Unless it proved entirely unable to influence the course of events, the British Government was not prepared to allow the French to remain in Antwerp. Fortified as it had been by Napoleon, and provided with arsenals and naval docks, Antwerp in French hands would mean a perpetual threat to the east coast of England. All the considerations that applied to the possession of the shore of the Low Countries applied with even more vigour to that of Antwerp, which presented in an epitomised and concentrated manner the same possibilities for swift attack and safe retreat.

No sooner had the problem of the Netherlands acquired actuality by the movements of the Allied armies and the liberation of Holland than British statesmen began to show their concern with the problem of Antwerp [1]. It

[1] Castlereagh to Aberdeen, November 23rd, 1813: "I must

preoccupied them constantly, and they made up their minds not to restore any of their conquests unless that extremely important war aim, the liberation of Antwerp from the French, had been achieved.

The question of the Southern Netherlands had two other aspects. The British Government wished to establish a barrier to the north of France, in order to prevent a renewed offensive sally on her part. What precisely would constitute this barrier was, in 1813 at least, not very clearly visualised by the British. The word was taken from the diplomatic terminology of the eighteenth century. If it might eventually mean a line of fortresses, as it did in the barrier treaties, it also meant, in the eyes of British statesmanship, any force or power that the French would meet if, after the peace, they tried again to invade the territory to the north of their frontier. Now it is clear enough that to place Holland as a sentry behind this barrier did not, at least before November 1813, present itself as an ideal solution. Still in bondage herself, and having as yet given no sign of the anti-French spirit for which the British were looking so eagerly, she seemed more suited to the less ambitious part of a support at the rear of the Power which would guard the barrier.

Nevertheless — and this is the last of the various considerations that pulled the British in different directions when they tried to make up their minds about the future of the Southern Netherlands — it was also desirable that Holland should be, territorially, stronger than she was

particularly entreat you to keep your attention upon Antwerp. The destruction of that arsenal is essential to our safety. To leave it in the hands of France is little short of imposing upon Great Britain the charge of a perpetual war establishment. After all we have done for the Continent in this war they owe it to us and to themselves to extinguish this fruitful source of danger to both. Press this as a primary object" (Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 114). On Nov. 30th, 1813, Castlereagh wrote to Cathcart: "I must beg you never to lose sight of Antwerp and its noxious contents" (*F. O. Supp. Russia* 343). On Dec. 31st 1813 Bathurst wrote to Wellington: "Our great object is Antwerp. We cannot make a secure peace if that place is left in the hands of France" (*Ged.* VII, p. 27). "Antwerp and Flushing out of the hands of France are worth twenty Martiniques in our own hands" (Harrowby to Bathurst, Jan. 19th, 1814. *Bathurst Papers*, pp. 260-2, q.v.).

before the French wars. Her frontiers then had been strategically untenable. Moreover, a larger territory would mean increased resources and a larger population to draw upon for the purpose of defence.

At the same time, the idea of a union between the two halves of the Netherlands was not a novelty in 1813. As has been shown in our introduction, British governments had occasionally envisaged it as a possible solution of the problem of the Low Countries during the long struggle with France. When, therefore, the Prince of Orange (William VI) arrived in London on April 25th, 1813, and started his cautious activities to obtain British support for an extension of Dutch territory towards the south he was not breaking entirely virgin soil. Furthermore, at the back of the minds of British statesmen, there may have been the consciousness that, after all, he was only asking for the restoration of what, in the course of history, had once been a reality.

However, until the battle of Leipzig at any rate, the situation was dominated by the very concrete fact that the Southern Netherlands were still held by France, and that it was by no means certain that the Alliance would remain in being long enough to liberate them. The immediate aim of British diplomacy in 1813 was to keep in being and to consolidate the Alliance, and to obtain an understanding between its members as to the minimum terms they would exact from France. It was natural, therefore, that the British government would not lend a willing ear to any suggestion which might sow the seeds of discord between the Allies, and there could be no question of their agreeing to dispose of the Southern Netherlands against the wishes of the legitimate owners. It may be true that since the peace of Lunéville Austria, which had exchanged the Southern Netherlands for Italian territories, could not in strict legality claim to be the rightful owner. But all arrangements made with revolutionary France might, to say the least, be considered as somewhat less solemnly binding than other international instruments. And Austria might not be prepared unreservedly

to renounce her Belgic provinces. She was known to have wished to exchange these territories for Bavaria long before she lost them. She might still hold similar views. In any case, the return of the Southern Netherlands to Austria, or at least to an Austrian Archduke, seemed to provide a barrier more adequate than that which would conprosist in placing Holland in direct contact with France.

It is easy to understand, in the circumstances, that, having been asked by William VI whether and to what point the territory of Holland might be extended [1], Castlereagh committed himself no further than to say that Great Britain would always wish to concur in anything that might strengthen Holland against France, and that there could be no objection to giving her a stronger and more compact frontier. The achievement of this object, added Castlereagh, would have to depend on future circumstances [2]. Castlereagh, at the same time, took a very guarded step towards the eventual realisation of this object when he wrote to Cathcart pointing out that one of the difficulties that would confront a restored Stadholderly government might be that of securing an adequate barrier for its frontiers, and directing him to communicate this view to the Emperor of Russia and, subject to the latter's approval, to the King of Prussia [3]. For the time being Castlereagh did not go further. In his statement on war aims after the battle of Vittoria of June 21st. 1813 there was no mention of the Southern Netherlands [4].

When Castlereagh heard, in the beginning of September 1813, that Austria had joined the Allies, he felt that the time had arrived for a clearer definition of the terms of peace. In his despatch to Cathcart, dated September 13th, 1813, Castlereagh asked for an adequate barrier for Holland. He did not, however, specify its nature. He did

[1] Summary of conversation between Castlereagh and the Prince, April 27 cl., 1813, made by Henry Fagel, *Ged.* VI, p. 1876–8.

[2] May 18th, 1813. Henry Fagel's procès verbal of the same day. (*Ged.* VI, p. 1882).

[3] Castlereagh to Cathcart, May 5th. See Appendix A, and above, p. 74.

[4] Above, p. 77.

not even do this in the very extensive "Memorandum respecting Holland" which was sent to the British representatives at the Allied courts on November 5th 1813. This document has already been analysed in our first chapter [1], and we have seen that, in view of the Frankfort proposals, Castlereagh was confronted with the difficulty that the Allies might consider themselves satisfied if the Rhine were given as boundary to Holland. Nevertheless, Castlereagh chose to ignore this possibility, and put before the Allies the alternative of interposing one of the great military powers of Germany between France and Holland, or else of giving Holland an adequate military frontier. This frontier was in that case to include Antwerp. The idea of combining an extension of territory with the interposition of a German power between France and Holland could not be mentioned, because nothing warranted the assumption that enough territory would become available in the Southern Netherlands for the simultaneous execution of both plans.

This document was communicated by Castlereagh to William VI of Orange, who, by the mention of a possible strengthening of the original frontier of Holland, felt encouraged to submit to Castlereagh his own views about the way in which this strengthening of frontiers and increase of territory ought to take place. The Prince had reasons for believing that Austria was not very anxious to recover her Belgic provinces [2], and, with the assistance of the Russian General von Phull [3], he worked out a plan for the eventual disposition of these provinces. This plan was embodied in a memorandum which the Prince

[1] Above, pp. 87 sqq.

[2] During his second visit to Van Hogendorp, at The Hague, in Dec. 1813, the Prince told him that while he was in London he had heard from von Wessenberg, the Austrian Ambassador, that Austria was ready to renounce the Southern Netherlands in favour of the House of Orange (Hogendorp, *Brieven en Ged.* V, p. 53). The Prince also positively asserted that Austria was unwilling to recover the Southern Netherlands in a letter to his German agent, von Gagern, dated November 14th 1814 (*Ged.* VI, p. 1960).

[3] De Bas, *Prins Frederik*, Vol, III, part i, p. 187. *Ged.* VI, pp. 1961–1965.

submitted to Castlereagh on November 9th 1813[1]. The Prince pointed out, in the first place, that if the French remained in the Southern Netherlands on the left bank of the Rhine, the position of Holland would still be highly precarious, and that the experience of previous wars had shown that Holland ought, by a suitable increase of territory, to obtain frontiers behind which she might be able to resist the first onslaught of France while waiting for her Allies to come to the rescue. To effect this strengthening of the frontier, the Prince had two sets of alternative proposals. The first was that Holland should acquire the two fortresses of Luxemburg, the key to the Netherlands, and of Juliers, so convenient for covering the lands between the Rhine and the Maas. With the acquisition of these fortresses would go that of the Southern Netherlands (including the principality of Liège) and of the German lands between Maas, Moselle, and Rhine, for statesmen have always liked to acquire strategic points in order to cover their territories, and further territories in order to cover strategic points. He put forward an alternative suggestion in case it should prove impossible to obtain from France the cession of Luxemburg. In that case, apart from the Southern Netherlands (including Liège), the Prince asked, of the territories between the Rhine, Maas, and Moselle, no more than the department of the Roer, which included Juliers, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Cologne. The Prince also had definite views about the solution of the barrier problem. He suggested that the existing fortresses might be placed in a state of defence, after which a suitable system for the adequate fortification of the Dutch frontier could be studied and executed in due course.

Naturally, the whole memorandum was no more than a series of pious wishes, and was well in advance of what Great Britain contemplated. Its tenour was all the more unreal as the British Government itself was already suggesting so much more than the Allies, who were still toying with the idea of the Rhine as a boundary of France. But the document had its importance. It contained the

[1] *Ged.* VI, pp. 1954–56.

programme of William VI, from which he at no time willingly deviated, and which he continued to press upon the British Government right up to the moment when the final decision as to extension of territory was taken. And, after all, the eventual solution approximated far more closely to the seemingly fantastic plan of the Prince of Orange than to the discreet proposals of Castlereagh.

Castlereagh meanwhile continued his activities in the direction which he had already indicated to the Prince of Orange. On the one hand he tried to obtain the consent of the Allies to an extension of Dutch territory, a matter which was not without difficulties, for even while Holland was again taking her place among the sovereign nations the Allies were still talking peace with the French, and the Rhine boundary had not yet been given up explicitly. On the other hand he was endeavouring to arrange for the interposition of a Germanic power, Austria for preference, between Holland and France. We know precisely how Castlereagh visualised the eventual extension of Dutch territory at that time, by a letter he wrote to Clancarty on November 11th 1813[1]. Clancarty had been appointed Ambassador to William VI, but had received no written instructions. Castlereagh now told him what frontier he wished to obtain for Holland: it was to "embrace at least Malines, Maastricht, and Juliers, and so to the Rhine at Cologne or Dusseldorf". This means that to the territory of the old Dutch Republic was to be added that of the department of the *deux Nèthes*, the department of the *Meuse inférieure* and most of the department *de la Roer*, the two latter in so far as they were not already old Dutch territory. This is the first mention of a concrete frontier on the part of the British. It would have given to Holland both Antwerp and the fortress of Juliers. Castlereagh also added that Luxemburg would be of immense importance. This fortress would have fallen entirely outside the line he had just been drawing. It is not clear whether his idea was that it should form an advanced post in the hands of Holland. Perhaps Castlereagh only meant

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 2.

that Luxemburg should be taken from France and should then be given to one of the Allies other then Holland. "Turn your mind to the barrier question," was Castlereagh's general recommendation to Clancarty, and, writing a week later to Aberdeen, he also drew the attention of this representative to the Austrian Court to the importance of a barrier for Holland [1].

Castlereagh was anxious to conciliate Austria, because he feared that she might still be inclined towards peace. He took care that she should be the first power to hear his views about the southern frontier of Holland, and at the beginning of December he unfolded his plans to von Wessenberg, the Austrian Ambassador in London, with whom he found himself in perfect agreement. They decided to act in concert, but to avoid publicity in order to excite no susceptibilities [2].

Meanwhile the Sovereign Prince of Orange was trying to obtain the widest possible support for his barrier plans. His friend Malmesbury pleaded with Castlereagh for the acquisition of the Southern Netherlands by Holland [3], while he himself, at The Hague, kept telling Clancarty, much to the latter's indignation, how much he wished for the annexation of the whole of that territory [4]. At Frankfort, the Headquarters of the Allies, the Prince's representative, von Gagern, was approaching Metternich, Nesselrode, Hardenberg, and Aberdeen [5]. He found the Allies

[1] Dec. 12th, 1813, Webster, *Br. Dipl.* p. 118.

[2] Wessenberg was keeping the Dutch Ambassador H. Fagel informed of these pourparlers (H. Fagel to the Sovereign Prince, Dec. 3rd, 1813. *Ged.* VII, p. 356).

[3] *Ged.* VII, p. 2.

[4] Clancarty to Castlereagh from The Hague, Dec. 14th, 1813: "The Prince would much rather that the Pays Bas Autrichiens should be annexed to his domain, than that a third power should be interposed between him and France. His ambition seems to get the better of his judgment in this respect". He added that the annexation would be unpopular in Amsterdam (*Ged.* VII, p. 10). On Dec. 16th Clancarty told Van der Duyn that it might be better for the interest, the happiness, and the tranquillity of the Dutch that Austria retained the Southern Netherlands and that they should not have the French as neighbours (*ibid.*, p. 11).

[5] Von Gagern to the Sovereign Prince, Dec. 8th 1813 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 371–3).

generally aware of England's desire for an Austrian restoration in the Southern Netherlands, but also agreed as to the necessity of a barrier for Holland. There was, however, a tendency to postpone any decision until the situation had acquired more clarity. "After all", the Allied statesmen pointed out to von Gagern, "the Southern Netherlands are still in the hands of the French. Are you not selling the skin before the bear is killed?"

The British Government, which had become thoroughly dissatisfied with the course taken by the negotiations, and which did not feel very happy about the part played by its representatives at Allied Headquarters, had decided, by the middle of December, that it would be advisable for Castlereagh himself to proceed to the Continent, in order that Great Britain should have the most authoritative representation on the spot [1]. In the course of the preparations made for this journey it was realised that as definite an attitude as was possible should be adopted in regard to the affairs of the Netherlands. Liverpool therefore had a conversation with the Dutch Ambassador Henry Fagel, in which he asked the Ambassador to ascertain the views of his Sovereign as to the military frontier necessary for the safety of Holland. Liverpool himself communicated to Fagel what were his own views on the subject, and these views entirely coincided with those expressed by Castlereagh in his letter to Clancarty earlier in the month. Fagel seems to have received the impression that the British Government would prefer the annexation of the whole Southern Netherlands by Holland, and that the smaller extension of territory was only considered as a *pis aller* [2] The Prince immediately replied by a memorandum dated December 26th, in which he merely repeated his request for the whole of the Southern Netherlands including Liège and Luxemburg, as well as the department

[1] The Allies also were struck by the lack of co-operation between the three representatives, and Stewart himself had asked Castlereagh to come over to the Continent (Fournier, *Congress von Châtillon*, pp. 53–54).

[2] H. Fagel to the Sovereign Prince, Dec. 21st, 1813 (*Ged.* VII, p. 408).

of the Roer. He declared this strategic frontier to be necessary and the acquisition of territory to be required for the purpose of revenue [1].

The strategic considerations which the Prince adduced in support of his scheme may have been of use to British representatives in the course of negotiations with the continental Allies, but, no more than the other contents of the memorandum, can they have influenced a policy which had already been shaped in London at the time the memorandum was received. Before starting on his continental journey, Castlereagh had drawn up a paper which he submitted to the Cabinet at its meeting of December 26th. He had prepared this memorandum with the utmost care, and it was written entirely in his own hand. As far as it dealt with the question of the Dutch frontier it expressed nothing beyond what Castlereagh had told Clancarty on November 11th, and it was also the expression of the views of that other leader of British foreign policy, the Prime Minister Lord Liverpool, who had spoken in the same trend to Henry Fagel a week before. As the paper was presented to the Regent as expressing the views of the Cabinet, and duly signed by him, it is an authentic statement of the policy of Great Britain [2].

In this memorandum, which was to form Castlereagh's vademecum on the Continent, the question of an extension of Dutch territory was shown to be closely connected with the possibility of a restitution of colonial conquests by Great Britain. As *sine qua non* for any kind of colonial restitution Castlereagh was to demand: i, "The absolute exclusion of France from any naval establishment in the Scheldt, and especially at Antwerp", and ii, the restoration to Holland of her territory of 1792, "with a suitable *arrondissement*" which was to include at least Juliers, Maastricht, and Antwerp [3]. It should especially be noted

[1] The memorandum in *Ged.* VII, pp. 19—20. Letter from Sovereign Prince to H. Fagel, Dec. 25th, 1813 (*ibid.*, p. 415).

[2] *Ged.* VII, pp. 16—19.

[3] The reason Great Britain favoured the acquisition of Antwerp by Holland appears very clearly from a correspondence between Wellington and Bathurst. On January 10th, 1814 Wellington wrote to Bathurst that he agreed that Napoleon should not be left in possession of a large naval establishment on the Scheldt. But he believed that this purpose would be achieved by the restoration of the Dutch frontier of 1792. "It may be desirable that Holland should have Antwerp on other grounds; but, seeing what use can be made of the Scheldt to annoy England, I am not quite certain whether it would not be best for us that one bank should be in the hands of one power, the other, Antwerp and the upper part of the river, in the hands of the other.." (*Ged.* VII, p. 27). On Jan 21st. Bathurst replied that the re-establishment of the frontier of 1792 would only remove Antwerp as an important naval station if freedom of navigation were prohibited on the Scheldt. But to obtain this would be as difficult as to obtain Antwerp for any power not Dutch. Only by declaring war against France could Holland enforce this prohibition of navigation in time of war. This would mean instant invasion from Antwerp (*ibid.* p. 28, note 1).

that the memorandum did not put an absolute veto upon the acquisition of further territories by Holland. It merely said that the Prince of Orange was "to be discouraged from any attempt to extend Holland on the side of the Netherlands beyond its ancient limits without the express consent of the Allies". There was, in this stipulation, a greater desire to avoid anything which might cause dissension among the Allies than to prevent an extension of Holland beyond the barrier of Antwerp—Maastricht—Juliers. The view that Austria would be a suitable intermediary power between Holland and France was not even expressed with the same decision as it had been in Castlereagh's conversations with the Prince of Orange. "Should Austria propose the settlement of the Archduke Charles in the Netherlands, the proposition to be favourably received," said the memorandum. Apparently, then, Great Britain was not to take the initiative with such a proposal, and Henry Fagel's surmise that the British Ministry was no longer averse to the annexation of the whole of the Southern Netherlands appears to have had some foundation. Perhaps the first successes of the Sovereign Prince in Holland, the obvious support he was receiving from the Dutch nation, and the favourable development of the plans for the Royal Marriage had influenced the Cabinet. The idea, however, had not been given up, and the memorandum contained a few lines about the advantages that would accrue both to Holland and to Germany if an

intermediate power of some importance could be created by connecting a considerable part of the German territory on the left bank of the Rhine with Brabant and other parts of the Southern Netherlands.

B. — *Castlereagh on the Continent. Great Britain favours a Larger Extension*

Five weeks after the Cabinet meeting which had laid down as the official policy of Great Britain the acquisition by Holland of no more than two departments of the Southern Netherlands and some territory between the Maas and the Rhine north of a line from Maastricht to Cologne, Castlereagh was actively engaged in obtaining for the Prince of Orange all the lands on the left bank of the River Maas as far as the old French frontier. This new scheme no longer allowed for the interposition of a third power between Holland and France. We must now try to understand how the Foreign Secretary had come to give up his original views so quickly.

On his journey to Allied Headquarters, Castlereagh stayed in Holland for a few days, when he was submitted to the strongest pressure on the part of the Prince of Orange and his ministers [1]. These were Castlereagh's first diplomatic encounters on the Continent. He displayed in them all the talent and all the strength which were to characterise his actions during the two following years. Rather ignorant, at least at the beginning, of Continental problems and personalities, he quickly made his way through their intricacies, guided only by a few general principles and by a clear insight into character. His main weapon consisted in the masterful display of British

[1] Castlereagh took ship for the Continent on New Year's Eve. The crossing lasted a whole week. He arrived at The Hague on Jan. 6th 1814, and had interviews with the Sovereign Prince and with Van Hogendorp on Jan 7th and 8th, on which day he left for Headquarters. For his interviews at The Hague, see: Castlereagh to Liverpool, Jan. 8th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 24–27); Van Hogendorp to Van Zuylen, Jan. 7th (*ibid.*, p. 448): The Sovereign Prince to Van Hogendorp, Jan 7th (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 229); Van Hogendorp to Castlereagh, Aug. 20th, 1815 (*ibid.* VI, p. 297).

reserve, in his ability to listen without moving a muscle of his face, compelling his interlocutor to unfold all his arguments without allowing him for one moment to know how far they carried effect, fixing him all the while with that cool, non-committal yet deferential gaze which we know from his portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence in the National Portrait Gallery [1]. The Prince of Orange, it is true, was no longer the suppliant with only the vague and distant backing of Alexander and Frederick William. He was a sovereign in his own country. Castlereagh had to speak as well as to listen, but he expressed his views no further than he judged opportune, nor did he show how much some of the Prince's arguments, and these not of the soundest, had impressed him. As for Van Hogendorp, his historical reminiscences were damped down, after he had been allowed his fullest say, by one of those sententious references to general principles with which Castlereagh liked to bring Continentals back to a sense of proportion.

To the Sovereign Prince Castlereagh delivered his message in accordance with his self-made instructions. He informed him of the British Government's views as to the barrier, the colonies, and the matrimonial plans. He told him that Great Britain intended to make a payment towards the barrier fortifications in exchange for the Cape Colony, but took care not to commit himself to any figure. As regards British ideas about the extension of territory, the Prince expressed himself satisfied, as far as they went, but he proved to be as desirous as ever of obtaining the whole of the Southern Netherlands as well as a large portion of the territory between the Maas and the Rhine. He brought forward as an argument the alleged desire of the populations of the Southern Netherlands to be united to Holland. This assertion would appear to have made a considerable impression on Castlereagh. Apparently he was no longer as completely averse to a further increase of

[1] The French royalist De Vitrolles has left a striking description of Castlereagh when playing such a part, in his *Mémoires*, Vol. I, p. 139, sqq.

territory as when he was in England. He could now see for himself the progress made by the Dutch, while the Prince's expression of gratitude for the "steady perseverance" with which Great Britain was acting on his behalf, and of his unbounded confidence in Great Britain, also favourably affected Castlereagh. But he feared that Austria really still wanted the Southern Netherlands in order to give them to the Archduke Charles. There appeared to be a complete contradiction between the information gathered on this point by the Prince of Orange and that which was at the disposal of Castlereagh. The latter pointed to the delicacy of the whole situation, and to the necessity of finding out the feelings of the Allies before any decisive step was taken, but he also promised to find out in how far and in which direction Austria might prove willing to accept other territories which might be put to the same use as the Southern Netherlands would have been.

Van Hogendorp went considerably farther than the Prince. He asked that France should be made to return all the conquests she had made from the Netherlands in former times, and not only those made since 1792. He also suggested that Great Britain should once more take possession of Dunkirk, which would serve as a link with the Netherlands, and as a port for the disembarkation of a British army in case of urgency. Castlereagh merely replied that these were ideas belonging to the eighteenth century.

The Sovereign Prince wanted something tangible and more immediate than Castlereagh's promise of general support. He considered that some form of possession would provide him with the best title to the Southern Netherlands, and asked if he could not be invited to undertake their provisional administration. Castlereagh said that this was a delicate subject, but promised that on reaching Headquarters he would cause the system of administration of the Southern Netherlands to be considered, and that he would press for a decision. The Prince also, through Van Hogendorp, expressed the desire to be

given the command of the armies that were to operate in the Netherlands. Although he agreed that it would be preferable to the dangerous expedient of dividing the command between several people, Castlereagh submitted that this too was a thing for the Allies to decide. Finally he promised that he would take Van Spaen, the Prince's representative at Headquarters, into his confidence and would advise him as to the right moment and the best way to obtain admission to whatever body was entrusted with the provisional administration of the Southern Netherlands.

No sooner had Castlereagh left The Hague than the Sovereign Prince drew up a memorandum repeating the arguments of which he had already delivered himself to Castlereagh. The memorandum, dated January 10th, 1814, was sent after Castlereagh. Its main aim was to make suggestions that might assist Castlereagh in framing the offer of compensation to Austria for the Southern Netherlands [1]. The Prince also asserted that, with the possible exception of Austria, the Powers were in agreement as to the reunion with Holland of the Southern Netherlands and the provinces left of the Rhine to the Moselle. The sources of the Prince's information are not clear, but he seems to have had a fairly definite idea of what was happening at Headquarters. According to Sir Charles Stewart [2], at the time the Prince was writing his memorandum Metternich may still have been in favour of giving Napoleon the Rhine frontier (although we have already seen that, as far as Holland was concerned, this term, in Metternich's mind, had a somewhat elastic acceptance). But he agreed to an extension of territory by taking as frontier a line from Antwerp to Malines direct on to Cologne, which was in agreement with the policy of the British Cabinet memorandum of December 31st. The Russians and the Prussians (Hardenberg and Nesselrode) and some Austrians at least (Stadion) were in favour of drawing a line for the frontier of Holland by Luxemburg

[1] *Ged.* VII, pp. 541—2.
[2] Stewart to Castlereagh, Jan. 10th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 28).

to Worms, or at least to Mayence [1]. And on January 17th, the day before Castlereagh's arrival at Headquarters, Aberdeen obtained from Metternich a formal renunciation of Austria's claims in the Low Countries [2]. Metternich expressed the desire that these countries should contribute to the strengthening of Holland.

When Castlereagh arrived at Basle on January 18th, he found that the Allied leaders were eagerly awaiting him. The military situation was brilliant, the Rhine had been crossed about the New Year, and the combined armies were fast occupying the north east of France and rolling Napoleon's armies behind the Rhône and the Seine. But the Allies' diplomacy was chaotic. No agreement had been reached as to the future form of the government of France. The minds of princes and diplomats were obsessed by problems like those of Poland and of Saxony. Castlereagh at once threw himself upon them and started to exercise his influence in favour of a temperate, but also a quick solution. The question of the frontiers of France was, however, the most urgent, for now negotiations were actually on the point of starting with Napoleon's minister Caulaincourt. His first conversations with Metternich, Stadion, and Hardenberg sufficiently enlightened Castlereagh. There was a general realisation that the Frankfort proposals were out of date, Metternich alone taking a rather more conservative attitude about peace terms. But even his geographical notions appeared to have improved, and his interpretation of the term "Rhine," as used in the Frankfort proposals, had become more unorthodox than ever [3]. Castlereagh also realised that the Sovereign Prince was nearer the truth than himself in his sanguine view about the Allies' readiness to consent to a large increase of Dutch territory towards the south. Having now definitely

[1] On Jan. 22nd. Hardenberg wrote to Van Hogendorp that he would look upon the acquisition of the Southern Netherlands by Holland as infinitely important and desirable, and that he would be happy to contribute to its realisation (*Ged.* VII, p. 455).

[2] Aberdeen to Castlereagh, Jan. 17th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 29).

[3] Castlereagh's report to Liverpool of the conversation with Metternich, Jan. 22nd, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 32–33).

ascertained that Austria, more interested in Northern Italy and the eastern border of the Adriatic than in the Southern Netherlands, was not prepared to occupy directly or by proxy the post of sentinel between Holland and France, Castelereagh decided in favour of a solution which would satisfy to a larger extent the wishes of the Sovereign Prince, whose arguments were sinking deeper into his mind [1].

When, therefore, both Metternich and Hardenberg invited him to explain his ideas on future arrangements to the north of France, Castlereagh went considerably beyond the instructions of the British Cabinet and the views he had expressed during his brief stay at The Hague. He made a distinction between the frontier to be given to France and that which might be acquired by Holland. Concerning the French frontier, he considered that the ideal arrangement would be a return to that of 1792 but he admitted that, circumstanced as they were, the Allies could not make so extensive a demand, and he therefore recommended a line which would follow the ancient frontier of France from the sea to Longwy, thence, embracing Luxemburg, go straight to the Moselle, which it would follow to Treves, and then directly to Mayence. This line would give the fortresses of Luxemburg and Mayence to the Allies. The Dutch frontier was to follow the ancient frontier of France from the sea to Charleroy, and then embrace Namur, Liège, Maastricht, Juliers, and Cologne. As Austria had waived her pretensions in the Netherlands, Castlereagh submitted for the consideration of Metternich and Hardenberg whether Prussia, as the second great military power in Germany, might not be brought forward between the Maas and the Moselle, hold Luxemburg and Mayence, and allow Holland, in consideration of these increases, some rectifications of frontier in Cleves and to the west of the Lower Rhine.

[1] In particular the information about the expressed desire of the Belgians to place themselves under the Prince's protection, which was actually repeated in Castlereagh's letter to Metternich, Nesselrode, and Hardenberg of Jan. 27th. (See below).

Apart from the fact that Castlereagh had become considerably more generous to the Sovereign Prince of Orange in these new proposals, there is much in them that is of the greatest importance. It is the first time that the idea of advancing Prussia beyond the Rhine towards France, which soon afterwards was so completely adopted by the Prussians, and which contributed not a little to complicate later negotiations, was uttered in the Allied councils by Castlereagh. It did not originate with him. As he wrote to Liverpool, he was induced to throw out this idea because he recollected that it was a favourite scheme of Pitt. He did not wish to make Holland the sole keeper of the French frontier towards the Netherlands. But another consideration moved him. "I doubt much the policy of making Holland a power of the first order, to which she would approach if she possessed the whole of these territories", he wrote. A power of the first order would not be a docile instrument of British policy. To place such a power along tho whole extent of the Low Countries shore would be a denial of the traditional policy of Great Britain.

The Prussian and Austrian ministers did not commit themselves to a complete acceptance of Castlereagh's proposal, but it impressed them favourably. "A good victory at Chalons", thought Castlereagh, "might make it popular". The principle of an extension of territory for Holland, and in particular the acquisition of Antwerp by the Dutch, received cordial and full approval. But Metternich and Hardenberg realised as well as Castlereagh that, until the Russian Emperor had approved of the scheme, no further progress could be made. On January 25th the three ministers repaired to Langres, where they joined Alexander. Castlereagh became once more involved in extensive debates that reached much farther than the question of the northern frontier of France. Instructions had to be drafted for the impending negotiations at Châtillon, and again the dynastic question in France played a large part in the debates. Castlereagh soon found himself leading the whole discussion, and before the month was out his mediation had been successful. It was agreed

that there would be no dictation to France, and that the Frankfort basis was to be abandoned [1].

During the course of these discussions Castlereagh did not lose sight of the Dutch problem. On January 27th he addressed a letter to Metternich, Nesselrode, and Hardenberg [2], stating in general terms his wish that Holland might receive "on the side of the Low Countries at a general peace a suitable accession to its military frontier and territorial resources", and asking that in order to invigorate the Sovereign Prince's exertion in the common cause, and to connect him with the people who might eventually be confided to his care, he might be given the administration of a due proportion of the territories to be re-conquered from France. Castlereagh also requested that a minister from the Sovereign Prince of Orange should be received in the central committee for administering during the war the territories recovered from the enemy. Stein immediately expressed his private agreement with Castlereagh's request, and stated that there could be no objection to Holland's occupying the departments *des Deux Nèthes*, *de l'Escaut*, and *de la Lys* [3]. Metternich replied with an unconditional approval. The official reply from Prussia, which was favourable, came much later [4]. From the private conversations that were taking place during these days Castlereagh gathered the impression that the Prince of Orange could count upon the acquisition of all the territory between the old French frontier and the left bank of the Maas [5]. He allowed Clancarty to bring the results thus far obtained to the

[1] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Jan. 29th 1814 (Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 141).
[2] *Ged.* VII, p. 39.
[3] Jan. 27th and Feb. 11th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 38, 60).
[4] Metternich to Castlereagh, Feb. 1st, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 39); Hardenberg to Castlereagh, Feb. 12th (*ibid.*, p. 60).
[5] Castlereagh to Clancarty, Feb. 1st, 1814: "As far as the Meuse he is quite safe". As Castlereagh had expressly stated, after his first conversation with Metternich and Hardenberg, that the agreement of the Russian Emperor was necessary (to Clancarty, Jan. 22nd, 1814. *Ged.* VII, p. 32), we may conclude that Castlereagh did not risk this assertion without having informally ascertained the Russian view.

knowledge of the Sovereign Prince, who might also be encouraged to instruct his minister Van Spaen to press his claims for the provisional administration of his future acquisitions.

Meanwhile, the Congress of Châtillon was starting, and the first meeting of the plenipotentiaries took place on February 4th. The next day Castlereagh, who was present as an observer, and not as an official delegate, made a sensational intervention in the proceedings, which confronted the rather farcical gathering with the necessity of grappling with realities[1]. It was apparent to every delegate that unless Napoleon was beaten in a sufficiently thorough manner to make a dictated peace possible, Great Britain's extra-European war conquests would have to be used as a payment for concessions on his part. This was quite apart from the fact that all the states were anxious that Great Britain should not obtain a disproportionate accession of power as a result of the war. Castlereagh now made the unexpected declaration that the mere fact of Napoleon's accepting the terms which might be asked from him would not be considered by Great Britain a sufficient warrant for the restitution of her conquests. For such a restitution, and even then not without some reservations, she was only prepared if the territories restored by Napoleon were distributed in a way to assure the security and the peace of Europe. Upon the introduction of this new element into the negotiations the meeting was adjourned.

Invited by the Allied Ministers who were at Châtillon to explain the views of his government in greater detail, Castlereagh gave them on February 6th a long explanation of the way in which Great Britain was prepared to restore the conquered colonies, and of the Continental arrangements which were required before she would take this step[2]. Holland, Sicily, and Spain he mentioned as "the powers of whose interests we were more specially

[1] Cf. Fournier, *Der Congress von Châtillon*, pp. 93 sqq. and Appendix VII, p. 372.

[2] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Feb. 6th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 44-51).

the guardians". As far as Holland was concerned, Castlereagh asked for a frontier which was the same as that he had suggested in his conversation with Metternich and Hardenberg, with one difference only: according to his previous suggestions the Dutch frontier was to leave the old French frontier where it met an imaginary line, drawn east to west through Charleroi, which means that it would probably have followed the river Sambre, while in the present instance the plan was that it should leave the old French frontier only when it met the Maas, i.e. at Givet[1]. The reason of this change is not very clear, unless it had appeared in the meantime to Castlereagh that the Maas was more suitable as the extreme frontier of Prussia than the Sambre. Castlereagh also suggested that it might remain open to discussion in whose hands the country between Maas and Moselle was to be placed. In connection with the intended retention of the Cape by Great Britain, he announced that his government had decided to set apart the sum of two millions sterling for the fortification of a barrier, "to be created in conformity with the wisdom of our ancestors on the side of Flanders for the military security of Holland and the north of Germany".

At the request of the Russian Emperor, who feared that an immediate peace might rob him of his triumphant entry into Paris, the congress was adjourned on February 10th. Castlereagh went to Troyes, where he had further conversations with Metternich and the other ministers. He was not successful in his endeavour to obtain from the Allies final declarations as to the settlement of all outstanding Continental questions. Therefore, when the Congress of Châtillon was on the point of re-opening, he decided that he must at least be in possession of a clear undertaking as to the Dutch increase of territory. He wrote to the Austrian, Russian, and Prussian Ministers[2] asking them

[1] "That the part of the Netherlands which, following the line of ancient France from the sea southwards, lay north of the Meuse from its departure from the French frontier at Givet to Maestricht, and a line drawn from the latter place by Aix-la-Chapelle and Düren to Cologne, should be ceded to that State" (i.e. Holland).

[2] Feb. 15th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 62-63).

for "satisfactory assurances as to those interests which are more immediately confided to the honour and friendly interposition of Great Britain". He submitted that these assurances might be most satisfactorily given in the form of a convention of which he enclosed a draft. This draft is extremely interesting, because it shows what were the objects which Castlereagh wished to achieve before all others. He asked, then, that the Southern Netherlands, as far as the frontier already indicated at Châtillon on February 6th, should be ceded to the Sovereign Prince and "annexed for ever to Holland as an integral part thereof"; that the other territories on the left bank of the Rhine "if not annexed in whole or in part to Holland", should be disposed of, in full agreement with Great Britain, and with due regard for the protection and military security both of Holland and of Northern Germany. He also made suggestions regarding an indemnity to Sicily, and the necessity of not returning captured ships of war to France.

Once more Castlereagh appears to have progressed in the direction of the programme of the Prince of Orange: he envisaged the possibility, at any rate, of a cession of all the territories north of France on the left bank of the Rhine to the Prince of Orange. The difficulties he had experienced during the first contacts with Continental statesmanship had not strengthened his earlier belief in the chance of cordial co-operation with the Allies. Prussia, so far, had not appeared anxious to undertake the task of second sentry behind the Barrier. The Prince of Orange, on the other hand, still seemed amenable to British influence. Perhaps there would, after all, be no great objection to the policy of "making Holland a Power of the first rank". Austria and Prussia immediately replied with an act of acceptance which embodied Castlereagh's draft [1]. Both acts were drawn up in identical words, but Hardenberg, in his covering letter, remarked that in case she was given territories on the left bank of the Rhine, Prussia would require them to possess a frontier which was really

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 63. F. Martens, *Recueil*, XI, pp. 200–201.

safe. Otherwise, she would prefer to make no acquisitions in those regions, and she therefore gave her signature only in the hope of obtaining suitable modifications of the suggested frontier. Russia did not sign at once. Nesselrode informed Castlereagh that her consent would depend upon certain arrangements which would indemnify her for the sacrifices she had made. This was a revival of Russia's old proposal, dating from 1812, that England and Holland would jointly take over Russia's debt to the banking firm of Hope. The question of this Russian debt will have to be examined in detail at a further stage. It caused, at present, no more than a delay in the Russian signature, which was eventually secured, in the first days of March [1].

In the draft treaty which was presented to the French plenipotentiary at Châtillon on February 17th, no detailed arrangements of the kind mentioned in the Austrian and Prussian acts of acceptance were mentioned. Article II stipulated for the return of France to her frontier of 1792, and section 3 of Article IV for Napoleon's recognition of Holland under the sovereignty of the House of Orange with an extension of territory. The fullest detail, however, was given about Great Britain's colonial restitutions. At this juncture the Congress was again adjourned, because after his recent successes, especially against Blücher, Napoleon wanted more favourable terms. Castlereagh had to use his utmost exertions to prevent an untimely peace. Having achieved this purpose, he found it possible to persuade the Allies to conclude a treaty of alliance by which the means to be applied in order to bring the war to a successful issue were definitely specified, and arrangements made for the continuation of the alliance after the war. Secret articles also laid down some of the details of the European settlement which was to follow the conclusion of the peace. As regards Holland, these details were less precise and less far-reaching than Castlereagh had wished. According to the draft drawn up

[1] It was dated Feb. 15th, but the precise date is unknown. Cf. Colenbrander, *Vestiging*, p. 168, note 2.

by Castlereagh [1], Holland was to become a "free and independent state under the sovereignty of the Prince of Orange, with a suitable augmentation of territory protected by a military barrier, and capable of maintaining an army competent to secure the same". But in the discussions at Chaumont [2] the question of the Dutch frontier caused difficulties which occupied several meetings. The Allies pointed out to Castlereagh, who wished to lay down the frontiers precisely and in accordance with the understanding of Châtillon, that it was not easy to arrange for the division of the territories, when the whole extent of the conquests that would be made was not yet known. Prussia declared that if Dutch territory was increased to such a degree that Prussia did not obtain on the left of the Rhine a territory which was militarily defensible and which could maintain an army of 100,000 men, she would not accept any indemnity on the left bank. She was not alone in her opposition. The Hanoverian Minister Münster disliked the idea of giving Holland territories belonging to the old Germanic empire, which could have been used for indemnifying other German states, and in particular Hanover. His arguments probably made it clear to Castlereagh that the Prince Regent might disapprove of too much insistence on behalf of Holland. A vague formula was therefore adopted. Holland was to be given an increase of territory and a suitable frontier (*une frontière convenable*). The Treaty of Chaumont was signed on March 9th, but dated March 1st [3]. Napoleon's counter-offer of March 15th which seems to have envisaged a Dutch state north of the Rhine, with North Brabant as a territorial increase, can hardly be said to have affected the issue.

Even Metternich was by this time well advanced beyond the notion of a peace on such terms. Napoleon's views were not to count much longer, even as a minor factor

[1] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Feb. 18th (*Ged.* VII, p. XVII).
[2] Münster to the Prince Regent, March 10th (Fournier, *op. cit.*, pp. 304–5).
[3] F. de Martens, *Recueil*, III, p. 194. Cf. Fournier, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

in the European settlement. And the southern frontier of Holland had become much too dependent upon many other points of the peace arrangements for a final decision to be taken by the Allies at the present juncture.

C. — *The Population of the Southern Netherlands and the Plans of the Allies*

We know that at Langres [1] Castlereagh reinforced his arguments for the acquisition of part of the Southern Netherlands by Holland with the assertion, based on a communication from the Sovereign Prince, that the inhabitants of the provinces wished to come under his rule. Nesselrode opposed this argument by sending Castlereagh a letter received from Brussels, which gave a different version of the feelings of the Belgians [2]. At first sight these statesmen appear to have displayed a genuine concern for what is now called national self-determination. To judge how far this principle existed in the minds of the Allies, and in particular in those of the British diplomats, when they were handling the problem of the Southern Netherlands, we must begin by ascertaining to what degree there existed a national feeling in the Southern Netherlands.

Nationality is the conviction held by a population that it forms a coherent unity and that it is distinct from other such coherent unities. A nation is a population holding this double conviction, which is the essence of nationality. Once the existence of this conviction among a population has been established, no further proof is necessary that it forms a nation; nor, where this conviction or one of its two elements is absent, can the group be said to possess complete nationality. The factors which normally lead to the existence of this conviction, language and literature, ideas, customs, traditions, community of economic interests, may conceivably all be present without the existence of nationality; nationality on the other hand may

[1] Jan. 27th, 1814.
[2] *Ged.* VII, p. 65.

exist without the presence of some of these factors. Convictions are made by fashion, propaganda, prejudice, or by persuasion and knowledge, none of which is a constant and invariable influence. The conviction which makes a nation may therefore exist at one time and be absent at another in a population [1]. The inhabitants of Belgium, at the end of 1914, had an acute conviction of coherence and of difference from other populations: at that moment, they were a nation. No such conviction exists among them at the time of writing. In 1814, only one half of the national consciousness existed.

The inhabitants of the Southern Netherlands had, at the end of the Napoleonic wars, a definite notion of cohesion; they felt that they belonged together. This conviction could not be based on language: there were Flemings and Walloons. It could not be based on religion: one part of the population was Catholic, the other, influenced by the ideas of the French Revolution, intensely anti-religious. But there was a definite community of customs and tradition and especially of economic interests. The inhabitants of the former Austrian Netherlands had lived together since the end of the sixteenth century. They strongly objected to being partitioned [2]. The population of the former principality of Liège was just as firmly opposed to any arrangement which would separate them from the other inhabitants of the Southern Netherlands [3]. The Maas was a link in the economic life of the population rather than a barrier — many towns on its course extended to both its banks. Innumerable business houses on the left of the river owned factories on the Ourthe, the Vesse, and the Hoyoux. All the Southern Netherlands obtained

[1] P. Geyl, *De Groot-Nederlandsche Gedachte*, Vol. I, p. 116: "We shall have to start with the admission that the sentiment of nationality is no more a stationary value than any other element in human history. It is a phenomenon which is liable to continual change under the influence of forces of the most varied nature".

[2] See, for instance, the opinion of the Archbishop of Malines, Depradt, in May, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 571–2).

[3] The views of a deputation from Liège, in April, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 106) and the paper written by them, which was delivered to Castlereagh.

their iron from mines and their slate from quarries on the right bank. Limburg exchanged its garden produce for the wheat that was grown in the Principality of Liège. The population was well aware that a political frontier cutting across the Southern Netherlands would be economically ruinous.

But if the sense of cohesion was widespread, the other element of nationality, the conviction of being distinct from other national groups, was strikingly absent. Not a single voice was raised, in 1814, in favour of independence. "Political passions stifled the national sentiment", says Pirenne [1]. But nationality is a form of consciousness; it only exists while and in so far as it is aware of itself. Among the population of the Southern Netherlands three parties existed from the point of view of national allegiance. The nobility and the clergy were Austrophile. They wanted to return to Austria because they hoped in this way to restore the old régime and the old institutions which assured them their supremacy in the country. Whether the political link with Austria was to be exactly similar to that which existed before the Brabant revolution, or looser, with an Austrian Prince at the head of the country, mattered less. The important thing was the knowledge that the surest way towards the good old days passed through Vienna [2].

If the Austrophile section was composed of the most influential people in the country, it was by no means the most numerous. The partisans of complete incorporation with France, who formed the second party,

[1] *Histoire de Belgique*, Vol. VI, p. 222: "Les passions politiques étouffaient le sentiment national et ne lui permettaient pas d'entraîner les masses dans le même mouvement. On aspirait à l'indépendance, et l'impossibilité où l'on se trouvait de la concevoir de la même manière faisait renoncer à y atteindre". To take for granted the existence of a national feeling which is admitted to have been stifled and which nowhere manifests itself is an act of faith, not of historical criticism.

[2] See, for instance, the report of the British agent M. Johnson to Castlereagh from Brussels, of July 7th, 1814 (F. O. *Austria*, 111); also reports about the deputation from Brussels to the Allied Headquarters in March 1814, which asked for a return to Austria, or if this were impossible, for the government of the country by an Austrian Archduke (*Ged.* VII, p. 90) Cf. also Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, VI, pp. 227–8.

were composed of the liberal bourgeoisie and those who had acquired national property during the French régime. While the movement in favour of Austria absolutely disappeared after the union with Holland, the partisans of France remained active and noisy during the fifteen years of the life of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. They were the most effective supporters of the Revolution of 1830, and at that time very nearly succeeded in carrying through their programme of annexation to France. The third current of public opinion was that of the lower middle class and the working classes, equally innocent of any complete national consciousness, but gradually becoming favourable to union with Holland, partly no doubt because they held that a return to Austria would have spelt the re-establishment of the oligarchy of the old régime [1]. As the intelligence that the Allies favoured the union of at least a large slice of the country to Holland percolated into the Southern Netherlands, the number of partisans of Holland naturally increased. There were time-servers who wished to make themselves agreeable to their future master, but there was also the growing mass of people who suffered under the exactions and brutalities of the Prussian armies of occupation, who wanted certainty above all, and saw in the union with Holland the only way, to end a provisional state of affairs which satisfied nobody.

The most convinced exponent of the doctrine of self-determination would have been powerless to apply it to the plastic material provided by the population of the Southern Netherlands. But nobody in the Allied camp thought of inviting the Belgians to choose for themselves. To begin with, the Belgians had not had the presence of mind, at the moment when the French armies were leaving their territory, to organise themselves in such a way that, like the Dutch, they could appear before the world

[1] A Dutch agent's report of the enthusiastic reception of the Hereditary Prince of Orange at Lier, Feb. 17th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII p. 494) or Clancarty's letter to Castlereagh, Feb. 12th, mentioning that Bülow had been amazed by the enthusiasm of the rabble in Belgium for Prince Frederic, the Sovereign Prince's second son.

as a nation that had liberated itself. The Allies were well aware of this fact: "The Allies had conquered these territories. They would be entitled to keep them all", said von Stein [1]. Voices from Belgium urging one solution or another were carefully excluded from the Allied concert which was none too harmonious in any case. Great Britain wanted to use the Southern Netherlands merely as a means of strengthening the watch on the north side of France, and the other Allies intended to use these territories as pawns in their complicated game of compensations and exchanges. Castlereagh himself refused to seek the consent of the lower classes for any plan; only that of the most distinguished part of the nation was worth obtaining [2].

These considerations do not imply that the British or the Dutch were utterly indifferent to the state of public opinion in Belgium. A favourable feeling among the civilian population is at any time a useful adjunct to the success of military operations. The British would have welcomed the active assistance of the Belgian population in the fight against the French. They took early steps to secure this by organising anti-French propaganda as they had done in Holland in the course of 1813. The importance thus attached to this work appears from the fact that they entrusted it to the experienced secret agent Johnson. In December 1813 he was sent to The Hague by

[1] To Van Spaen, May 1st, 1814: "By the same reasoning they could have kept the whole of Holland," replied Van Spaen. "No", said von Stein, "you yourselves revolted and liberated your country" (Van Spaen to Van Nagell, *Ged.* VII, p. 551). See also the letters from Brussels written by the British agent M. Johnson during May 1814 (*F. O. Austria*, 111). Commenting upon the Prussian exactions in Belgium, Johnson quoted from a letter written by the Prussian General Thümen to Count de Nieuport, Intendant of Bruges: "The Prussian army having driven the French troops out of this country had a right to consider it as a French province, and to treat it as a conquered country" (*ibid.*).

[2] Van Spaen to Van Hogendorp, March 14th. Castlereagh had said to him: "....Au commencement.... on avait un peu effarouché les esprits des premiers et des plus notables du pays en travaillant le peuple, comme si l'on voulait obtenir par la populace ce qui ne devait venir que de l'assentiment et de la volonté libre de la partie la plus distinguée de la nation" (*Ged.* VII, p. 523).

Aberdeen, who authorised him to draw £25,000, principally in order to purchase and distribute arms in Brabant. Johnson communicated with Clancarty who gave him a chilly reception and declared that things were going very well without a shilling's expenditure and that the inhabitants of the Southern Netherlands were sufficiently ripe for revolt. Johnson, nevertheless, began to organise his work, and a few days later he explained his plans to Aberdeen. Insurrections in the principality of Chimay and in the country from Valenciennes to the junction of the Sambre and Maas ought, in his view, to be fostered, because they would bar military communication between France and the Netherlands, which was a particularly desirable object at a time when Davoust's continued hold on Hamburg was delaying Wintzigerode's advance. Aberdeen thoroughly agreed with Johnson, and supported him against Clancarty [1]. At the first opportunity Johnson passed into Belgium and started his agitation. Even the Prussians would have liked to obtain the active assistance of the Belgians, and von Bülow was very displeased about their apathy [2]. The only personage of importance who appears to have given a thought to the wishes of the inhabitants apart from the advantage there was in making them coincide with his own was Wellington. This somewhat unexpected recognition of the principle of self-determination may have been the result of his daily experience of the power of nationality as a factor in war during his Peninsular campaign [3].

If the British failed in their main purpose of rousing a warlike spirit among the population of the Southern Netherlands, they were not without success in another direction. By acting as the sponsors of the Sovereign Prince of Orange, they were able to deflect towards him a certain amount of the goodwill of the population. For there

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Dec. 14th, 1813 (*Ged.* VII, p. 10); Johnson to Aberdeen, Dec. 31st, 1813 (F. O. *Austria*, 111); Aberdeen to Castlereagh, Dec. 31st, 1813 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 20–21).

[2] Van Zuylen to Van Hogendorp, Jan. 14th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 458–9).

[3] Wellington to Castlereagh, Oct. 19th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 201).

is no doubt that in 1814 the British were popular in Belgium. This was partly a matter of contrasts. The Russian and Prussian troops had made themselves odious, while the British armies, which were extremely well disciplined and paid for everything they required, were welcomed everywhere. There may have been some dissentient voices here and there. It was said in January 1814 that the citizens of Ghent were averse to a union with Holland, because they feared that the friendship of the Prince of Orange for England would prevent him from introducing a tariff to protect their industries [1]. These feelings became stronger in later years, but they do not appear to have been widespread at the time. Johnson also noticed these Anglophile sentiments and repeatedly commented upon them in his reports [2].

[1] Van Zuylen to Van Hogendorp, Jan. 15th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 460—1).

[2] "I receive daily and convincing proofs that a confidence in the protection of H. R. H. the Prince Regent and of the lively interest which H. R. H. is considered to take in the welfare of these provinces is likely to form the strongest bond of union between the Sovereign Prince and his new subjects" (Johnson to Castlereagh, Brussels, June 7th, 1814. F. O. *Austria*, 111). On July 4th Johnson writes: "So long as there appeared a probability of an intimate connection subsisting between this country and Great Britain, I conceived that there would be no obstacle to a cordial and permanent incorporation of Belgium with the United Provinces of Holland, but as a recent event (the rupture of the engagement) has rendered this doubtful, and has dissipated the illusion in which the Belgians very eagerly indulged of belonging, altho' indirectly, to the British Empire, the task of the new government becomes peculiarly difficult" (*ibid.*). On Feb. 21st the agents Bauwens and Huyttens had already reported: "On aime les Anglais à la folie" (*Ged.* VII, p. 513), but it cannot be said that the British reciprocated this sympathy. Here is one example, a letter from the young British diplomat, G. W. Chad, to Van Nagell, from Brussels, on June 9th, 1815: "I hope you had a fortunate journey to The Hague, although I conceive it difficult that any common circumstance would render it otherwise. The transition from such a Gehenna as this place is, to so delightful a residence as The Hague, must be fortunate. I wish I could once more find myself your neighbour in the Boschkant, and exchange the sincerity and warm-heartedness of your countrymen for the contemptible cunning, low intrigue, and tinsel foppery of H.M.'s new subjects. I have tried all I can, but it is not in my power to like the Belgians, and I really think that if I were to conquer my distaste for them, I should think ill of myself and be disposed to fear that I had ceased to admire the sterling qualities of honesty and integrity" (*Ged.* VII,

The leaders of Dutch policy, Van Hogendorp and the Prince, would naturally have preferred to become possessed of the Southern Netherlands in such a manner that the Allies were, as had been the case with Holland, placed before an accomplished fact. Van Hogendorp wanted to organise a rising against the French, while the Sovereign Prince wished at least to advance the common cause of the Allies by stirring up the Belgians, and by making them compromise themselves in the eyes of Napoleon. He also saw that if a speedy annexation could not be obtained, much good would result from giving the Southern Netherlands an able administration which would put an end to partisan strife [1]. A Dutchman, Hugo van Zuylen van Nyevelt, was, in December 1813, sent to Belgium in order to work among the people in accordance with the views of Van Hogendorp and the Prince. His mission was to serve as a link between the Allied generals in Belgium and the Dutch government, and more particularly to influence the people, promising them peace, a liberal and paternal government, freedom of commerce, political and religious equality. He was also to induce men of standing to send deputations to the Sovereign Prince, expressing confidence in him and placing themselves under his protection [2]. Care was taken not to provide Van Zuylen with any ostensible credentials. He was to correspond with the Dutch Foreign Secretary. Two Flemish industrialists from Ghent, Bauwens and Huyttens, who had offered their services and their advice to the Prince at The Hague at the end of December [3], were sent back to work

p. 244). The completely unfounded stories about the cowardice of the Belgian troops at the battle of Waterloo (e.g. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*) are due to this aversion.

[1] The Sovereign Prince to Van Spaen, Feb. 23rd, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 511).

[2] Van Zuylen to Van Hogendorp (a recapitulation of his instructions), Jan. 6th, 1814 (Ged. VII, p. 447). This is an important document, because it proves that many of the principles upon which the eventual Union of the two parts of the Netherlands was based were familiar to the Dutch leaders at an early date.

[3] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, V. pp. 53, 208, 480. They were the men whose information led the Sovereign Prince to believe in those

under the direction of Van Zuylen. A number of other people are known to have worked for the Orange cause in Belgium. Articles were placed in the local press, a Dutch committee was formed in Brussels, and Orange cockades were distributed in the villages and in the country [1]. Entirely apart from all these activities were those of Count A. van Bylandt, who corresponded directly with the Sovereign Prince, and who disapproved of the activities of Van Zuylen's agents.

When Castlereagh met Van Hogendorp during his stay at The Hague, the question of public opinion in the south was mentioned. Castlereagh, who had still to find out what really were the views of the Allies, advised moderation and circumspection. Nothing was to be done before the Allies had clearly pronounced themselves in the matter of sovereignty. He seemed, however, to see no objection to expressions of attachment to the Prince of Orange which might come from Belgium, provided nothing in the nature of a proclamation of his sovereignty took place [2]. From Langres, after he had gathered some first impressions, Castlereagh wrote to Clancarty that he saw no reason why the Prince "should not by emissaries or other means quietly encourage the people of the Low Countries to look to him as their future Sovereign" [3]. But before this instruction had reached Clancarty, the Dutch propaganda system in the Southern Netherlands had caused serious difficulties between him and the Dutch government. We have seen that Clancarty did not like propaganda: he

early days that he would be welcomed by the people of the Southern Netherlands, and it is on their assertions, which he heard from the Sovereign Prince when he visited him in January, that Castlereagh based his communication to the Allies, already repeatedly mentioned. Bauwens and Huyttens sent interesting rather than trustworthy information. It appeared, at a later stage, that they returned very inflated accounts of expenditure. They were not a happy choice.

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 429, note; *ibid.*, pp. 326–8, a letter from the Austrian Feltz to Metternich, Feb. 11th, 1814. Reports from Bauwens and Huyttens, in Feb., *ibid.*, p. 504; etc. Their accounts of expenditure, *ibid.*, p. 593. Van Bylandt's reports, *ibid.*, pp. 515–19.

[2] Van Hogendorp to Van Zuylen, Jan. 7th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 448).

[3] Feb. 1st, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 38).

had received the excellent Johnson in a rather unfriendly manner, and, moreover, did not take with kindness to any show of independence on the part of his Dutch protégés. There is no doubt that he wished them well, but he wanted any good which came to the Dutch to come from the Allies and through the channel of British diplomacy [1].

The Allied generals in Belgium certainly disliked attempts to provoke any expression of opinion by the population. There was an instance of this when the Allies entered Brussels on February 8th. The Duke of Clarence and Prince Frederic, the second son of the Sovereign Prince, attended a performance at the theatre. When, after the performance, the public turned towards their box in order to applaud the British royal personage, the Duke retired into the background and compelled the young Prince to receive the ovation. Nesselrode called this "a scandal". When Clancarty heard of the event, he remarked, "The Duke of Clarence has sometimes very odd manners" [2]. But he had other reasons for stronger dissatisfaction. Van Zuylen was circulating his pamphlets through Belgium. Clancarty heard of one of them, a "letter from a nobleman in Brussels to one of his friends in Ghent," which was a plea for the imitation of the example set by the Dutch [3]. The British Ambassador became exceedingly annoyed, and pointed out to Van Hogendorp the impropriety of this open propaganda. There was, in his view, only one legitimate way of obtaining the Southern Netherlands: this was by a voluntary cession on the part of the Austrian Emperor. Moreover, the Dutch had no right to act independently of Castlereagh, to whom they had entrusted the defence of their interests. Clancarty easily obtained the promise that Van Zuylen's pamphlet

[1] This is the view expressed by Van Hogendorp in a letter to the Sovereign Prince on Feb. 2nd, 1814 (*Br. en Ged.*, I, p. 284), and there is no reason to doubt that it was well founded.

[2] Colenbrander, *De Vestiging*, pp. 164–5; Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, V, pp. 53 sqq., which tells the whole story of the *démêlés* with Clancarty. Clancarty to Castlereagh, Feb. 5th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 41), Clancarty to Hamilton of the Foreign Office, Feb. 9th (*ibid.*, pp. 55–56), Clancarty to Castlereagh Feb. 11th and 12th (*ibid.*, pp. 565–8).

[3] *Ged.* VII, pp. 42–43.

should be disavowed, and this Van Spaen was instructed to do at Allied Headquarters. Van Zuylen was informed of this decision, told that he too must disavow the pamphlet, but assured that the Sovereign Prince would remember this proof of attachment to his Person [1].

A few days later Clancarty was still more horrified when he heard further details of Van Zuylen's activities. The Prince of Orange, it now appeared, had "been playing the very devil in attempting to agitate the public mind in the Austrian Low Countries". Nothing less than a deputation to The Hague for the purpose of making direct overtures to the Prince was being mooted! Clancarty's indignation flared up. A meeting had to be arranged between himself, the Sovereign Prince, the London Ambassador Fagel, and Van Hogendorp, at the home of the last named. The Prince was in a very subdued mood, insisted on Clancarty's taking the best chair, and listened to the indignant homily in which Clancarty demanded the recall of all the agents employed by the Prince. The Prince assured Clancarty of "his regrets that such a difference had occurred, expressed his sense of the impolicy of the conduct he had been led to adopt, which he had take effectual means to stop, and in a manner really affectionate.... dwelt for a considerable time upon the numerous instances of kindness which he had received from the British Government". Clancarty, greatly mellowed, now informed the Prince of Castlereagh's exertions with the Allies to confer upon him the provisional administration of a part of the Austrian Netherlands. Thus provided with sound doctrine and moderate encouragement, the leaders of Dutch policy went home, no doubt full of good intentions. It is perhaps only natural that their behaviour did not immediately become as perfect as Clancarty flattered himself would be the case. By the end of the month he had once more to complain about the activities of Dutch agents in the Nether-

[1] Van Hogendorp to Van Spaen, and to Van Zuylen, Feb. 3rd 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 488). Van Zuylen was recalled by a letter from Van Hogendorp dated Feb. 6th (*ibid.*, p. 492).

lands[1]. But his opposition to any attempt at working upon the popular spirit in the Southern Netherlands was fast becoming solitary.

The attention of the Allies had been drawn very sharply to the existence of a public opinion, however hesitating and divided, in the Southern Netherlands. As soon as Brussels had been liberated, a meeting of Belgian notables took place which decided to send four of their number, the Duke de Beaufort, the Marquis de Chasteler, the Marquis van Assche, and the ex-Pensionary of Brabant, de Jonghe, to headquarters in order to pray the Austrian Emperor that their country might return to Austria or at least be governed by a prince of the imperial family. When he heard this, Aberdeen expressed the hope that "all this party spirit" might soon subside, as there was in reality nothing to keep it up [2]. But the delegation was taken very seriously by the Allies, who, if they did not for one moment think of giving way to the wishes of the inhabitants, however distinguished, were nevertheless fully aware of the advantages of obtaining their acquiescence and even their goodwill [3]. The Emperor of Austria received them in audience, and gave them definitely to understand that Austria could in no conceivable circumstances take their country back, directly or indirectly. He advised them "to look for an incorporation with Holland", but promised that the Allies would take into consideration their wishes as to religion, commerce, debts, etc. These wishes the delegates were apparently asked to put in writing.

Conferences were immediately held between the Allied Ministers, who examined each point of the Belgian request very carefully. The main and immediate consideration that actuated the Ministers was that the country should arm itself and assist in defeating the French. It

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Mar. 1st, 1814 (Ged. VII, pp. 74–5). Cf. Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, V. p. 320.

[2] Johnson to Aberdeen, Feb. 20th 1814; Aberdeen to Castlereagh, Mar. 12th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 88).

[3] Castlereagh to Clancarty, Mar. 13th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 90), and Mar. 14th (*ibid*, pp. 90–93); Metternich to Vincent, Mar. 29th 1814 (*ibid.* pp. 329–33).

was decided to place an Austrian at the head of the provisional administration, but to warn the deputies that no conclusion as to their definite destination was to be drawn from this appointment. Metternich urged the necessity of giving a guarantee that the Catholic religion would be respected, without excluding just tolerance to other creeds. It should not be thought, however, that this was a new aspect of the problem to the British. Edward Cooke, the Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, had written a month earlier to Castlereagh that Holland would have much to do about a concordat if she got Brabant, and that an arrangement would be necessary if essentially Catholic provinces were to be joined to essentially Protestant provinces [1]. It was also agreed to free Belgian commerce from unreasonable and unnatural trammels and not to saddle the population with unjust debts. These undertakings were meant to allay the fear of the Belgians that the Scheldt would remain closed or that they would have to share the Dutch debt. But there was nothing final in the wording of the promise: "Les souverains alliés auront à coeur.... Ils emploieront en général leur haute influence...." were the words used in the document that was handed to the delegates. Vague terms that did not settle anything! The delegates, like all Austrophiles in their country, wanted the re-establishment of their old decentralised constitution and their privileges. On this point the Allies were adamant. Castlereagh had not found it difficult to persuade them that Holland and the Southern Netherlands would resist France only if they formed one state. He saw as clearly as he had seen it in 1813 in the case of Holland that a federalist system would make for weakness. It was agreed, therefore, that there could be no question of a return to the old constitution [2].

The Belgian gentlemen who had consulted the oracle

[1] Feb. 17th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 61). It is very likely that these views were the result of conversations with the Austrian Ambassador in London.

[2] Castlereagh to Clancarty, March 14th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 91).

interpreted its reply in accordance with their own wishes. As late as May they still confidently expected that their country would return to Austria [1]. But, although they were eventually disappointed, they had gained one advantage. The Allies, especially Austria and Great Britain, henceforth attached more importance to the state of public opinion in the Southern Netherlands. During the month of May, Metternich sent repeated instructions to Vincent, the new Governor General of Belgium, that he was to prepare the inhabitants for their re-union with Holland, and that, in order to popularise this re-union, he must keep contact with the British agent Johnson and through him with Clancarty [2]. On the other hand, Lord Liverpool advised that concessions should be made to the Belgian population, especially from the point of view of their religious feeling, in consideration of the fact that their country would be the theatre of future wars, which would in any case be a burden upon them [3].

It is outside the compass of this work to follow the detail of the provisional arrangements made by the Allies for the administration of the Southern Netherlands until they finally passed into the hands of the Sovereign Prince. We have only to acquaint ourselves with them in so far as they are an element in the British diplomacy of the day. When he was at The Hague, in January, Castlereagh promised the Sovereign Prince to press for a decision on this question, and he intended, in so far as this could be done without offence to the Allies, to support the Prince's claim to a share in the administration. But meanwhile the Allies, at Basle, had come to an agreement as to the provisional administration of all territories which had been or were to be occupied by their armies to the north and east of Paris. The departments of the *Roer*, *Ourthe*, and *Meuse Inférieure* were to be administered from Aix-la-Chapelle by the Prussian Privy Councillor

[1] Van der Capellen to Van Nagell, May 10th 1814 (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, Vol. II, pp. 10–12).
[2] Metternich to Vincent, May 1st and 14th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 333–5).
[3] H. Fagel to Van Nagell, May 31st 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 588).

Von Sack, while those of *Sambre et Meuse*, *Dyle*, and *Jemappes* would be administered by a Prussian, Baron von Horst, whose seat would be Brussels [1]. At Headquarters, Castlereagh tried, at the end of January, to arrange for the part of Belgium on the left of the Maas to be placed under the administration of the Prince. His request was mentioned in the course of his circular letter to the Allied Ministers dated January 27th. The Russian demands for a settlement of their debt, and the Prussian reluctance to come to a definite arrangement before other questions concerning the extension of Prussian territory had been decided were the causes of delay in the decision. Meanwhile, von Bülow and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar occupied Brussels and organised the provisional administration in accordance with the scheme of January 12th [2], although von Horst actually took over the government only on March 20th. In the interval two Prussian Commissioners, Lottum and Delius, were in charge of the administration.

The ambitions of the Sovereign Prince suffered another serious setback. He had hoped to be placed at the head of the Allied troops in Belgium, and here again Castlereagh was prepared to support his claim [3]. But when, after Napoleon's successes in February, the Allies, and especially Alexander, showed a strong inclination for peace, he arranged for the corps of von Bülow and Wintzigerode to be detached from Bernadotte's army, and as a compensation obtained for Bernadotte the command of all the troops besieging French fortresses [4]. This meant that the Sovereign Prince would be placed in a military command subordinate to that of the Prince Royal of

[1] De Martens, *Nouveau Recueil*, I, pp. 638–42. This agreement superseded that which had been made by the Allies at Leipzig on Oct. 21st, 1813, when a central commission for the administration of the reconquered territories as far as the Rhine had been established under the presidency of von Stein.
[2] Colenbrander, *Vestiging*, pp. 165–6.
[3] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Feb. 11th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 57).
[4] *Cambridge History of Br. For. Pol*, I, pp. 441–2; Castlereagh to Clancarty, Feb. 27th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 67); to Thornton, same day (*ibid.*, pp. 67–8).

Sweden. To this the Sovereign Prince agreed in a manner which mollified Clancarty and appeared to him "princely and dignified". As a result he gave his fullest support to the Prince's wish to be forthwith entrusted with the territories assigned to him [1].

The idea of giving the Prince the provisional administration of at least some departments contiguous to Holland, to which von Stein had agreed in February, had been abandoned as a result of von Bülow's action after the occupation of Brussels, and now a similar fate befell a further plan, submitted to Castlereagh by Hardenberg, and drawn up by von Stein on March 6th [2]. It contemplated the appointment of the Sovereign Prince as civil and military administrator of the territories between the old frontier of Holland, that of France, and the left bank of the Maas, but stipulated that the financial resources of the departments of the *Meuse Inférieure*, *Sambre et Meuse*, *Dyle*, and *Jemappes* should go to the Prussians. Incidentally, von Stein saw in this arrangement the advantage that the Prince would be able to strengthen the influence he already possessed, and to use to good purpose his knowledge of the character of the population, a doctrine which came very near to an admission of the Prince's views on propaganda. This plan was never executed because the Emperor of Austria promised the delegation from Brabant that an Austrian Governor should be appointed.

Castlereagh had no reason for rejecting the Austrian plan. If it meant a disappointment for the Sovereign Prince, and was not the arrangement he would have favoured himself, Castlereagh saw nevertheless that it would at least have the effect of preventing the Prussians from playing their own hand. Altogether apart from the idea of making acquisitions on the right bank of the Maas, which had only come to them as a result of Castlereagh's proposals at Troyes in February, the Prussians wished to keep a considerable share in the control of Belgian affairs

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Mar. 7th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 81–3).
[2] *Ged.* VII, pp. 78–9.

until the final peace settlement, because they wanted to hold as many pledges as possible in order to obtain the territorial extensions in which they were really interested. Moreover, their method of supporting their armies by requisition in the occupied territories gave them a direct interest in maintaining their occupation over the largest possible area. Castlereagh was alive to the behaviour of the Prussians, and had no desire that it should foster friendly feelings towards France among the population. The armies of Bernadotte which had been sent deeper into Belgium as a result of the British desire to reduce Antwerp as soon as possible were, incidentally, not behaving much better than those of the Prussians [1]. Castlereagh must have realised that the Prince of Orange would not have the same authority to protect the population as a representative of Austria. It was, of course, from Castlereagh that the Prince's representative Van Spaen learned of the Allies' decision. But Castlereagh added as a consolation that there was no longer any hesitation or difficulty about giving the Southern Netherlands to the Prince at the peace. Only the question of frontiers remained to be settled [2].

There must have been some further pourparlers between the Allies, for it was only on March 29th that Metternich wrote to Vincent, who was an Austrian born in the Southern Netherlands, that the Emperor had appointed him to be Governor General of Belgium in the name of the Allied Sovereigns. He was to correspond with von Stein, the head of the central administration of conquered territories. His main purpose was to increase the military resources of the Allies by what could be obtained from the rich and populous Southern Netherlands. A commission

[1] Bathurst to Clancarty, Mar. 15th 1814, about the importance of an attack upon Antwerp (*Ged.* VII, pp. 96–7; cf. also *ibid.* pp. 100 sqq.). For the behaviour of Bernadotte's troops, which treated even the historically Dutch district round Maastricht as an enemy country, made severe requisitions, and refused to recognise the Prince of Orange, cf. Clancarty to Castlereagh, Mar. 22nd (*ibid.* p. 95).
[2] Van Spaen to Castlereagh, Mar. 4th; Castlereagh to Van Spaen, Mar. 8th (Ged. VII, p. 75); Van Spaen's report to Van Hogendorp of his conversation with Castlereagh, Mar. 14th (*ibid.* pp. 522–4).

would assist him, and the four Allied courts would appoint a commissioner to reside with him and assist him in his functions [1]. It had been agreed that the commissioners would be appointed by Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Holland, England appointing only a *chargé d'affaires*, a function which was entrusted to Johnson [2]. When Vincent went to Brussels, as a result of this instruction from Metternich, von Horst refused to cede his place to him. It was not until May 6th that the transfer of powers finally took place. (Vincent's Governorship was to last till August 1st.)

D. — *The Peace of Paris — France once more a Factor in European Diplomacy*

While the complications of Continental relations had driven Castlereagh to work for an increase of Dutch territory much larger than he had originally planned, and while this enlarged programme had met with a considerable measure of approval in principle on the part of the Allies, his efforts to obtain for the Prince of Orange a provisional instalment of his future acquisitions had failed. The reasons of his failure were the Russians' lack of disinterestedness, and still more the ambitious policy of Prussia, fast becoming a serious rival of the Dutch in the Southern Netherlands. It is a somewhat unexpected fact that the defeat of France by the Allies had as first result that she was able once more to make herself heard in the councils of Europe. After the restoration of the Bourbons, the idea of making the peace less onerous to them than it would have been made to Napoleon came naturally to all the Allies. Under the Restoration the territorial ambitions of France would become less dangerous through the loss of revolutionary impulse. As the counter-revolution progressed there arose, moreover, except among the embittered Prussians, a desire to eschew anything that might unduly contribute to making the Bourbons

[1] Metternich to Vincent, Mar. 29th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 329–30).
[2] Metternich to Vincent, May 1st 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 333–4).

unpopular among their subjects. To this consideration is due, among others, the amazingly quixotic decision to leave to the French the works of art which they had taken from churches and museums all over Europe, during the wars of the Revolution and of the Empire. This forbearance, which can only be attributed to a deplorable lack of interest in things of beauty, greatly irritated the Prince of Orange because it withheld from him an important means of conciliating his future Belgian subjects, who had particularly suffered from the raids of official French connoisseurs.

The Dutch increase of territory was also endangered by this new frame of mind of the Allies. Before he had definitely committed himself to the cause of the Bourbons, Metternich was already admitting, in conversation with the French Royalist agent De Vitrolles, that there might be a possibility of giving France a share of the countries between Rhine and Moselle, perhaps even of giving her Luxemburg [1]. French appetite grew during the negotiations which followed the fall of Paris (March 30th), and Talleyrand was presently displaying all his immense gifts of persuasion and intrigue in order to obtain part of the conquests of revolutionary France for the Bourbons. Castlereagh had to put up a hard fight to save his Châtillon scheme.

The negotiations for the first Peace of Paris were unexpectedly long drawn out. The peace terms were only settled about the 22nd of May [2] and the treaty was signed on the 31st. Van Spaen, the Dutch representative who had followed the Allied Sovereigns to Paris, complained that it was difficult to know what was going on, and that the conferences were a real *tripotage*; while in London Henry Fagel, the Dutch Ambassador, was equally unsuccessful in his endeavours to obtain information [3].

[1] De Vitrolles, *Mémoires*, Vol I, p. 103 (Middle of March 1814).
[2] When Castlereagh sent a rough draft to Liverpool (Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 185).
[3] Van Spaen to Van Nagell, May 14th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 572). On April 26th he had written an interesting letter to Van Hogendorp, which gave a vivid picture of the difficulties encountered by the

Castlereagh had an arduous task to perform. Entirely willing to show a friendly disposition towards Bourbon France, he made what he considered to be a liberal restitution of conquered colonies, but when Talleyrand, under pressure of the Napoleonic Marshals and of King Louis XVIII, asked with much insistance for large concessions on the side of the Netherlands, and in particular claimed a considerable slice of maritime Flanders[1], Castlereagh replied with a peremptorily worded refusal, and made up his mind to tell the French King that if he wished for a lasting peace he would have to "extinguish in the minds of the army this false notion of Flanders being necessary to France". Talleyrand was not the man to break his head against a bolted door, and a few days later Castlereagh was able to report that he had secured the

representative of a minor Power and of the way in which the negotiations were conducted. It deserves extensive quotation: "The Big Powers have not only kept to themselves the direction of all affairs, but their ministers display such a reserve and are so full of mystery about all their activities that one has the greatest difficulty in extracting any information from them. To make an attempt to learn anything gives one the air of being importunate or indiscreet. If only they would consult one when the need arises, if only one knew that they were not going to forget their original plans and their early promises, one would feel more secure. There are so many divergent interests, and all the Princes, especially the more influential ones, have so many pretensions and so many rights, that I am always afraid that in the end something will be given up. The deep mystery with which Belgian affairs are surrounded, even by Lord Castlereagh, makes me rather suspicious. Only the day before yesterday I tried without success to obtain from him some kind of positive utterance. I am constantly told to wait for the final arrangement.... Apart from the pretensions of some of the other Powers, I greatly fear the subtle craft of the Duc de Bénévent, and the results of the Emperor Alexander's coquetting with France, if I may thus express myself. He is the hero, and *par excellence* the man who seems to have done everything. He is flattered, fawned on, cajoled, as he himself at the outset cajoled people. He is perhaps the only Sovereign who has no direct interests to defend against France and who can take up the attitude of wanting no more than the praises which are bestowed upon him with so much liberality" (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, Vol. V, pp. 492–3). H. Fagel to Van Nagell, May 15th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 572): The Government and especially Lord Liverpool observed absolute silence towards him.

[1] Van Spaen, who has heard this from Castlereagh himself, to Van Nagell, May 19th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 582).

consent of France to the incorporation of the Low Countries with Holland[1].

With the other Powers also there were difficulties. Efforts were certainly made to come to an understanding for the general re-drawing of the map of Europe whilst peace with France was being concluded. Prussia and Austria appeared desirous of obtaining an agreement with France and Russia[2]. We know that this proved impossible, and that the disposal of the re-conquered territories had to be left over for later decision. The frontier of the Netherlands was not settled in Paris, but, unlike many other subjects, it could not be altogether postponed, because a decision had to be reached about the northern frontier of France, and this immediately involved the extent of the acquisitions to be made by the Sovereign Prince. On April 29th the Prussian Chancellor Hardenberg submitted to Castlereagh a "Plan for the future arrangement of the Frontiers of Europe"[3], a document which breathed the spirit of equilibrium, reckoned out numbers of inhabitants and weighed up cessions and acquisitions in terms of human beings.

For the Netherlands Hardenberg's frontier corresponded with the ancient frontier from the North Sea to the Maas (apart from a few minor rectifications); it then followed the Maas, leaving however to Holland Venloo, Roermond, and Maastricht with a *rayon* for each place. The frontier left the Maas at Liège (which would go to Holland) and reached the old French frontier beyond Luxemburg, taking in that fortress as well as Bastogne and Arlon. The old French frontier would then be adopted until the North Sea was reached, but with not inconsiderable modifications which would leave the French in possession of Givet, Chimay, and Beaumont. Other features of the plan were that Juliers would be a Dutch enclave and that in the territories between Rhine, Moselle, and Maas certain

[1] Castlereagh to Liverpool, May 19th and 23rd, 1814 (Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 185).

[2] Castlereagh to Liverpool, May 5th 1814 (Webster, *Br. Dipl.* p. 180).

[3] *Ged.* VII, pp. 113–4.

places would be set aside for the junior branches of the Nassau family, who were to lose their possessions across the Rhine. Hardenberg emphasised the importance of Holland in the new system to be established in Europe, and especially in relation to the independence of Northern Germany and of Prussia, and based upon it his recommendation for an increase of Dutch territory. He also suggested that Holland be invited to form a perpetual alliance with the Germanic Confederation, which might or might not mean the same thing as ordinary membership.

Hardenberg's plan was submitted to the other Allies, and although no agreement could be reached as to its major proposals, they were all in favour of guaranteeing to Holland the acquisition of the territories on the left of the Maas, and accepted Hardenberg's suggestion as to the northern frontier of France. Castlereagh, who was obtaining the recognition of the main lines of his Troyes scheme for the territories on the left bank of the Maas, did not show himself unwilling to grant the relatively slight concessions to France on her northern frontier, which would give her a direct communication between Maubeuge and Philippeville [1]. He therefore once more set out upon his task of consoling the Dutch, and, while telling Van Spaen that the union of Holland and Belgium was now entirely decided upon, at least as far as the Maas, and while it was settled in principle that this river would not be the limit of the extension of territory, the Allies had found it necessary to give the French a rather large district with about 100,000 inhabitants towards Namur and Mons, although without these towns [2].

It cannot be said that the negotiations were brought

[1] Castlereagh had realised earlier that some concessions to France were unavoidable, but had tried to make them elsewhere than in the Netherlands (Castlereagh to Liverpool, Apr. 19th, Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, pp. 177—8). It should be noted also that the territory in question contained three enclaves which had been French even before 1792. See the map opposite p. 28 in Hertslett, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, (I). Robert Fagel to the Sovereign Prince, May 20th 1814 (*Ged.* VII p. 583).

[2] Van Spaen to Van Nagell, May 19th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 582).

to an end on May 30th, but they were sufficiently advanced for the treaty to be signed on that day, in deference to the British who wanted to cease their war subsidies to the Allies after that day. The French frontier by the treaty reverted to that of January 1st 1792, but of the territories formerly belonging to the Southern Netherlands, France retained the cantons of Dour, Merbes-le-Château, Beaumont, and Chimay in the department of *Jemappes*, and the cantons of Walcourt, Florennes, Beauraing, and Gedinne in the department of *Sambre et Meuse* (Article III of the treaty).

Castlereagh had not succeeded in his efforts at effecting a full distribution of the re-conquered territories. But some points were specifically mentioned in the treaty, one of them being (in Article VI) that Holland, placed under the Sovereignty of the Prince of Orange, was to receive an increase of territory. Castlereagh considered it necessary that when going to the final Congress he should have a pledge that France acquiesced in this important aspect of his policy [1]. For the same reason he managed to insert a secret article in the treaty, which said that for the establishment of a just balance of power Holland should be enabled to support her independence through her own resources, and that therefore the countries between the sea, the frontier of France, and the Maas were to be given for ever to Holland. The same article sanctioned the postponement of a decision about the destination of the territories to the right of the Maas, where the frontiers were to be "regulated according to the military convenience of Holland and her neighbours". The next secret article, which laid down that the German territories on the left bank of the Rhine would contribute to the aggrandisement of Holland and would be further applied to compensate Prussia and other German states, was also a plain confession that the Allies had failed to come to an agreement. All they could do was to secure from France, apart from the acceptance of the modified frontier of 1792, an

[1] Castlereagh to Liverpool, May 23rd (Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 185).

explicit admission of their right to dispose of these territories in accordance with their own views.

Of high significance was the stipulation that Antwerp should be "solely a commercial port". Although it was fully understood that Antwerp was to be included in the Dutch increase of territory, the British had exacted this further guarantee against its future use as a base for an attack upon their country. The Netherlands were concerned also in the arrangement made for the division of ships of war, arsenals, and naval material between France and the countries where the maritime places restored by the French were situated. France was to obtain two thirds, the other power one third of the ships and material. An exception in favour of Holland was made of the fleet which had been immobilised at The Helder and which Admiral Verhuel had refused to surrender in December.

The Treaty of Paris also established the freedom of navigation on the Scheldt [1]. Castlereagh had probably no definite views upon this subject; but the Chamber of Commerce of Antwerp naturally wanted the abolition of the closure of their river, which had existed since the capture of Antwerp by the Spaniards in 1585, continuing to all intents and purposes during the French period owing to the British blockade, and was preparing to send a deputation to put this wish before the Allies. The Austrian Governor Vincent advised them to address their request directly to the Prince of Orange, who evidently wished to reserve to himself the political advantage of granting so important a concession to the people of Antwerp at the moment when they should definitely learn that they were to become his subjects. He was, at the same time, perfectly well aware that to his Dutch subjects the loss of the privilege of bottling up their competitors would be most unpalatable and he therefore wanted the news of the increase of territory to come simultaneously. At the

[1] By placing it (secret art. 3) on the same basis as that on the Rhine, which, by the fifth patent article, was made free from the point where it became navigable to the sea.

moment of re-union the freedom of the Scheldt would, he hoped, seem a small price to pay by the Dutch for the great increase in the power and size of their country. The Prince had also a plan for using the freedom of the Scheldt as a bait to induce the population of the Southern Netherlands agree to share the Dutch debt. But Kunigl, the Austrian member of the commission which was assisting Vincent in the administration of the country, took it upon himself to issue directions for the re-opening of the river. Clancarty wrote to Castlereagh in support of the views held by the Prince of Orange, and Vincent himself saw to it that Kunigl's orders were not carried out [1].

The secret article was not to the liking of Liverpool, who saw no reason why outsiders should be given the right to navigate the river. He would have preferred to omit the subject from the Treaty of Paris, and to have it discussed after the annexation [2]. The article must have been finally inserted in this treaty as a result of the desire of the Austrians to render a service to their former subjects. We may be sure the French gave their support, for the freedom of the Scheldt agreed with their policy in the Netherlands. It necessitated the maintenance of basins in Antwerp, which in a future war might conceivably be of use to the French, but to nobody else. To attribute the clause on the freedom of the Scheldt merely to the pledge made to the Brabant deputation at Headquarters in March would be to disregard the fact that other pledges made at the same time were not fulfilled either in the treaty or afterwards. Only the day after the signature of the treaty did Castlereagh send a copy to Clancarty for the confidential information of the Prince of Orange, who was then in Paris, and found himself confronted with accomplished facts [3].

Before the Allied leaders left Paris, they took one

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, May 13th and 19th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 123–5 and 127–8); Van der Capellen to Van Nagell, May 15th (*ibid.*, pp. 576–7); Van Nagell to Van der Capellen May 16th (*ibid.*, pp. 577–8).

[2] Liverpool to Castlereagh, May 27th, 1814 (*Ged.*, VII, p. 131).

[3] Castlereagh to Clancarty, May 31st (*Ged.* VII, p. 131).

further executive step which also affected the Southern Netherlands. On June 3rd arrangements were made for the continuation of the provisional administration of the territories re-conquered from France. The government of Vincent was to come to an end, for the Belgian territories up to the left bank of the Maas were to be occupied and administered by the British and the Dutch, and the territories between the Maas, the Moselle, and the left bank of the Rhine down to the French frontier by the Prussians. These decisions only came to the knowledge of the Sovereign Prince after the middle of the month, some days after the 15th of June which had been fixed by the Allies for the transfer of powers [1].

E. — *The Sovereign Prince tries to act independently*

While in the public part of the Treaty of Paris no more than a general mention of an increase of Dutch territory was made, the agreed fact that this increase would extend to the Maas in any case, and conceivably beyond this river, was put down only in the secret articles. The signatories were in no hurry to make their decision known to the world, and both Prussia and Russia were unwilling to put it into effect before their own claims had been recognised. But the Sovereign Prince naturally hated this secrecy to which he was not even a party. He had already displayed a certain restlessness in the course of the negotiations. In April 1814 he had seriously considered a journey to Paris, but the advice of Clancarty, and especially the conviction that he could not be spared at home had caused him to give up this intention [2]. Soon he discovered that, apart from the difficulty of obtaining the definite assignation to himself of the Southern Netherlands or even the right to occupy and administer the country provisionally, there were serious indications that the Allies would submit his eventual possession to a series of restrictions and conditions.

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 604.
[2] Clancarty to Castlereagh, April 22nd (*Ged.* VII, p. 108).

In March the Allies had made certain promises to the delegates from Brabant. They intended to keep them, as far as possible, and while negotiations for the Treaty of Paris were going on, pourparlers as to the best way to proceed were taking place in Paris. Instructed by Castlereagh, Clancarty pressed upon the Prince the necessity of giving to the Belgians a guarantee upon the questions of religion, commerce, and debt, and told him that he was himself preparing a plan for the union between the two countries. The Prince, who liked to settle things without the interference of even his own ministers, cannot have been very pleased with the British Ambassador's activity. But he promised that, with the help of his most impartial advisers, he would work upon the problem of the mode of union [1]. The idea of leaving the inhabitants of the south free from shouldering a part of the Dutch debt was particularly unpalatable to the Sovereign Prince, who considered that the first result of this inequality would be that many of his northern subjects would migrate to the southern half of the country, while there was no reason in justice why the Belgians, who would profit by the return of the colonies as much as the Dutch, should not contribute to paying the interest of the debt accumulated in acquiring these colonies. Another source of Dutch indebtedness, according to the Prince, also directly concerned the Belgians. It was the series of wars against France, which had really been fought in order to save them from being conquered and absorbed. Clancarty was convinced by the Prince's arguments, and supported them in his correspondence with Castlereagh [2]. The view that the question of indebtedness was not one-sided, because the Southern Netherlands had a debt of their own, of which Austria wished to rid herself as much as of the country itself, equally impressed him. The amount of the Belgian debt was not yet known, but it was as clear to the British

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Apr. 22nd (*Ged.* VII, p. 108).
[2] Van Nagell to H. Fagel, May 13th (*Ged.* VII, p. 573); Van Nagell to Van der Capellen, same date (*ibid.*, p. 574). — Clancarty to Castlereagh, May 19th (*ibid.*, pp. 128–9).

Ambassador as to the Prince himself that the only possible arrangement was to amalgamate the two debts and to make both countries collectively responsible for the total.

The Sovereign Prince knew of the currents of opinion prevailing in the Southern Netherlands. Van der Capellen, Dutch Commissioner to Vincent, the Governor General of the Southern Netherlands, regularly reported to the Sovereign Prince, who had therefore not needed Clancarty's hints before giving his attention to the treatment of the Belgian population. The Prince realised that if the constitution for Holland, which had already been promulgated in March, was to work smoothly when the annexation became a fact, it would have to be modified in certain respects. He wanted these modifications to be his own, and to be of such a nature that they would not affect the essential unity of the united Netherlands. This intense desire to make his own arrangements did not preclude, on the part of the Prince, a readiness to consult with the British. On the contrary, their active assistance, provided it did not raise any obstacles to the realisation of the centralised state which he intended to found, was welcome enough. That is why he had instructed his commissioner Van der Capellen to co-operate most intimately with the British chargé d'affaires, Johnson [1].

About the middle of May, the Allies decided that before any further step was taken beyond the general understanding that part of the Southern Netherlands would be given to Holland, a commission would have to prepare for approval by the Allied Sovereigns a plan for the union of the two countries. This commission was to consist of an equal number of persons from both countries, and would deal with questions such as the central authority, religion, finance, and trade. Castlereagh informed Clancarty of this decision in a letter dated May 16th [2], and asked that the Prince should appoint the Dutch representatives while Vincent would have the appointing of those for the Southern Netherlands. Thus, although they had refused

[1] Van der Capellen's Instructions, May 19th (*Ged.* VII, p. 561).
[2] Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, II, pp. 16–17.

the Belgians any voice in the ultimate destination of their country, the Allies were willing to allow them a certain freedom of choice in the arrangements by which this decision would be executed.

This was almost the last thing to which the Sovereign Prince was prepared to submit. Van der Capellen had left no doubt in his mind that the projected union was unpopular in the Southern Netherlands. There was no foreseeing to what length of opposition the Belgian members of the commission might go, nor how they might use their opportunities for obstruction. They might very well make demands which would imperil the strong position that, thanks to the political indifference of his Dutch subjects, the Sovereign Prince had acquired since his return from England. Another, and undeniably more cogent, argument against the appointment of Belgian commissioners was the impossibility of determining what authority they would carry among their compatriots, who might afterwards disavow them. When, therefore, Clancarty, who on May 20th had received Castlereagh's letter of May 16th, communicated its substance to the Dutch Foreign Minister, the Prince immediately met Clancarty and informed him of his objections. He announced that he was leaving for Paris without delay in order personally to defend his interests, and Clancarty, who this time was unable to dissuade him from taking the journey, decided to do the next best thing, and to accompany his unruly ward on his new adventure [1].

Van Nagell, the Foreign Minister, was immediately made to work out a memorandum, based on notes written by the Prince a few days earlier, which the Prince intended to use as a basis for negotiating with the Powers in Paris [2]. The Dutch scheme for the union of the two parts of the Netherlands provided for freedom of religion and state subsidies for ministers of religion, the treatment of all matters regarding dykes as of local concern, the

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, May 20th 1814 (*Grondwet*, II, pp. 17–18).
[2] The Prince's notes of May 16th 1814; Van Nagell's memorandum May 20th (Colenbrander, *Grondwet* II, pp. 14–19).

sharing of the national debt, or at least equal taxation of north and south, freedom of the Scheldt and complete equality between Antwerp and all Dutch ports, equal representation of north and south in the States General. Equality of treatment is the keynote of the whole document. It is further emphasised by the promise that the Sovereign would reside part of the year in Belgium, and that the States General would have alternate sessions in each country. The whole scheme was one of complete centralisation, with only one exception: North and South were each to have their own Council of State.

The Sovereign Prince, accompanied by Falck, the Secretary of State, and by Clancarty, arrived in Paris at the moment when the peace treaty was practically settled, and decisions on the many points which had been left over were being adjourned to the meeting of the Allied leaders in London. The Prince and his Ministers were, in the words of the latter, "sent from Pontius to Pilate, from Alexander to Metternich, from Metternich to Castlereagh". William of Orange, a petitioner once more, found the doors closed against him as firmly as they had been in the days of his exile. If a little more consideration was shown to him in the ante-chamber, the council room remained impenetrable, and, mixed with the crowd of German Princelings who were besieging the Big Four with their requests, he must have felt painfully impotent after his six months of quasi-absolutism at The Hague. Happily, he had one advantage over the other minor rulers.

Restored by predestined fate to his role of Mentor and Advocate, Clancarty was bestirring himself most gallantly. The client, duly humbled, was after all fighting for sound principles. Unity and strength of the central government of the Netherlands was a dogma of the British as much as of the Prince. Clancarty spent a couple of days canvassing right and left, and finally drew up a paper, destined for the Allied Governments, in which he compared the Belgian thesis with that of the Dutch, and, emphasising the conciliatory nature of the latter,

concluded in favour of it [1]. As set out by Clancarty, the Belgian demands were the following:

1) freedom of religion; 2) freedom of trade, which meant, in particular, the free navigation of the Scheldt; 3) exemption of the Belgian provinces from sharing the Dutch debt; 4) maintenance by the Dutch of Dutch dykes; 5) residence of the Sovereign and his court for part of the year in Brussels. The Dutch, according to Clancarty, asked for the following concessions: 1) compensation for the opening of the Scheldt; 2) participation by the Belgians in the debt occasioned by the acquisition and preservation of colonies; 3) exemption from taxation destined for the maintenance of fortresses situated in the Southern Netherlands; 4) consideration of the fact that the southern provinces also had a debt, part of which would have to be borne by the Dutch.

Though Clancarty's statement was one long argument in favour of the Dutch view of the union, it ended with a proposal which went straight against the Sovereign Prince's dearest conviction. Articles based upon the Dutch counter-proposals were to be drawn up and submitted by the Governor-General Vincent to a gathering of Belgian Notables designated by him. Even this discreet form of plebiscite appeared dangerous and unwarranted to the Sovereign Prince. When Clancarty brought him his memorandum the Prince instructed Falck to write a reply asking that without further delay the Powers should conclude a treaty with him for the annexation of the Southern Netherlands in accordance with the principles put forward by Clancarty, but without consulting the Belgians. Clancarty at alest was completely convinced by the Prince's arguments, and, while doing his best to persuade Castlereagh, wrote a letter to Metternich, Nesselrode, and Hardenberg, in which he drew their attention to his own memorandum and to the Dutch reply, copies of which he added to his own letter [2]. A third enclosure accompanying

[1] Clancarty's memorandum, dated Paris, May 25th 1814, in Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, II, pp. 19–25.

[2] May 31st (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, II, p. 19).

this letter was the summary of the Dutch thesis written by Falck in the form of separate articles. This summary was, in fact, nothing else than the famous "eight articles" eventually embodied in the act by which the Prince of Orange, on July 15th 1814, accepted the sovereignty of Belgium [1]. They were an entirely Dutch contribution to the negotiations. "If the Powers had had the initiative in drawing them up", writes Falck in his memoirs, "too much or too little would probably have been laid down — probably both. By omitting something of importance or by entering into too considerable detail, a different idea from that intended might easily have been conveyed. The King" (i.e. the Sovereign Prince, who became King in 1815) "would have had to choose between Dutch and Belgian interpretations, or, an even more disagreeable and questionable alternative, he would have had to consent to one of the two parties applying to foreign sovereigns for an authentic interpretation. But now the text contained precisely that which, according to his own plan, had to be said. He was able to realise his purpose to the fullest extent. No doubt could exist in the country or abroad as to the meaning of the main points, which were formulated clearly and succinctly, while he maintained a free hand to make all further dispositions and give to all matters such direction as, guided by a further consideration of existing relations and a closer acquaintanceship with his subjects old and new, he would deem appropriate". "The fact that this document had been produced by a Dutch pen", continues Falck, "had to remain a deep secret, in order that the complaints which more than one of its stipulations were bound to elicit should never be accompanied by suspicions of the Sovereign's impartiality. It was to the foreign diplomats, who would be supposed to have expressed their *sic volo sic jubeo* in hasty ignorance, that criticism was to be diverted" [2].

[1] Falck's version, in the original French text, Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, II, pp. 27-28. The final act of July 21st, Hertslett, *Map of Europe*, I, pp. 37 sqq., where the only difference is that the order of Falck's seventh and eighth articles has been inverted.

[2] Falck, *Gedenkschriften*, p. 140.

This somewhat Macchiavellian confession on the part of the man who had been instrumental in framing the basis of the union for the two parts of the Netherlands deserves quotation because, corroborated as it is by the original documents, it establishes beyond a doubt the true parentage of the eight articles. It is all the more necessary to insist on the genuine version, as the elaborate deception so clearly explained by Falck misled a distinguished historian who has recently given his own version of the story. According to Professor Pirenne, "Castlereagh prevailed upon the Prince, and not without difficulty, to accept the eight articles on July 21st" [1]. The truth, as we shall presently see, is that, in July, Castlereagh with much difficulty brought the Prince to accept an arrangement of which the eight articles formed a part. But that the eight articles themselves had been submitted to the Powers by Clancarty, on behalf of the Sovereign Prince, as early as May 31st is a matter of common knowledge which somehow has escaped the attention of the eminent medievalist. It cannot even be argued that the policy of the eight articles originates as much with the Belgians and the Allies as with the Sovereign Prince. For in the first days of January, before the Allies were aware of the existence of any demands or even wishes on the part of the Belgian population, the Prince's emissary Van Zuylen had started his work among the Belgians, to whom, in accordance with his instructions, he was offering "a liberal and paternal administration, trade without fetters, equality of political and religious rights" [2]. In the

[1] *Histoire de Belgique*, VI, p. 236. Cf. P. Geyl, *De Groot Nederlandsche Gedachte*, Vol. II, essay on "*Belgistische Geschiedschrijving*".

[2] Van Zuylen's instructions as recapitulated by him on Jan 6th, 1814, already mentioned above, p. 232 (*Ged.* VII, p. 447). One only of the eight articles did not originate with the Dutch. This was the stipulation about the dykes. In part of the Southern Netherlands and among all the Allies, romantic notions prevailed about the perpetual struggle of the Dutch against the sea and about the quantity of treasure spent each year on the dykes. As a matter of fact, the maintenance of dykes was a local concern, and only in rare cases of catastrophe did the central government render financial assistance. (Cf. Falck, *Gedenkschriften*, p. 144.)

keenness of his desire to obtain possession of the Southern Netherlands, the Sovereign Prince had precisely gauged the aspirations of his future subjects. It was his own policy that was sanctioned when the union took place upon the basis of the eight articles. But his greatest triumph, of course, was that the Allies sanctioned nothing else and nothing worse, and that they gave up the idea of a plebiscite.

The Allies did not immediately signify their unreserved acceptance of the eight articles. Falck tells us that they met with positive and unanimous approval in Paris. But when, on June 6th, the Prince arrived once more at The Hague, nothing had happened yet to put an end to his uncertainty. The Emperor Alexander and his henchman King Frederick William of Prussia had been invited to London, where negotiations preliminary to the Congress of Vienna were to be held. Metternich was going there to represent Austria, while Nesselrode and Hardenberg accompanied their respective sovereigns. The Sovereign Prince would have liked to go to London too, for, apart from the union of Holland and Belgium, much else remained unsettled. The weeks that followed the signature of the peace at Paris were of the highest importance in the fate of the Netherlands. Simultaneously with the negotiations round the eight articles, the affair of the Royal Marriage was speeding towards the catastrophe planned by Russian and Whig intrigue; the Prussians were persisting in their efforts to suck Belgium dry, in their encroachments on old Dutch territory, and in their activities aiming at large annexations on the right bank of the Maas; the Russians were pressing their claims for the transfer of their financial obligations, and negotiations in regard to the return of the Dutch colonies were starting. The Sovereign Prince was making ceaseless efforts to obtain a more favourable frontier settlement beyond the Maas, and wanted to launch into further endeavours to obtain immediate possession of his new territories. From Nesselrode he had heard something about the financial

claims of Russia, which had hitherto been most carefully withheld from his knowledge [1].

Still the Allies were debating and deciding in his absence. Still the British protector claimed the part of Providence, and still the Prince was asked to remain satisfied if decisions were communicated to him a day or so before they appeared in the London Gazette. He was eating his heart out at The Hague, and wanted to dash over to London in the same way as he had suddenly rushed off to Paris. But against this new adventure there were stronger objections than against the old. Literally nobody wanted to see the Prince in London. Not the Russians, certainly, who were trying, with what success we know, to undermine British influence in the Netherlands. Not the Prussians, with whom the rivalry across the Maas was becoming daily more acute. Not the British, who wanted quiet and tactful negotiations in which the affairs of the Netherlands were to remain nicely subordinated to the larger problem of European settlement. Neither did the Dutch Ambassador Henry Fagel, whose knowledge and experience of England had long since convinced him of the Prince's incapacity to adapt his mind to the idiosyncracies of British diplomacy, and who felt that the presence of the imperious father could not possibly help the complicated suit of his more pliable son.

Clancarty advised the Sovereign Prince to wait at least till there was further news about the marriage negotiations. He asked meanwhile for instructions from London, and in London the matrimonial question was equally considered a good pretext for keeping the Sovereign Prince out of the country [2]. To the Prince's continued and impatient pleas for the acceptance of the eight articles without consultation of Belgian notables, Clancarty gave the most energetic support. His visit to Brussels on the return journey from Paris, and the conversation

[1] Colenbrander, *Vestiging*, p. 188, note 3.

[2] W. Fagel to the Sovereign Prince, from London, June 14th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 597); Clancarty to Castlereagh, June 7th (*ibid.*, pp. 136–7) and June 8th, June 10th (*Grondwet*, pp. 28–30); to Cooke, June 10th (*ibid.*, pp. 31–32); to Castlereagh, June 14th (*ibid.*, p. 32).

he had had with Vincent, the British general Lord Lyndoch, and the agent Johnson had persuaded him that an immediate decision was required. He kept urging Castlereagh to settle this affair as well as that of the handing over of the territories on the left of the Maas [1]. The best policy seemed to him that of presenting the Prince with a treaty "ready cut and dry", based upon the eight articles.

Castlereagh was as convinced as the Ambassador that the sooner an end was put to the provisional situation in Belgium, the better it would be for everybody concerned. But it was not an easy matter to bring the Ministers of Russia, Prussia, and Austria together in order to make them talk of business. Most of their time was occupied with ceremonies and festivities. However, on June 20th, Castlereagh, Metternich, Hardenberg, and Nesselrode held a conference at which it was decided that Hardenberg would order the Prussian troops to cross the Maas and to occupy the territory between that river and the Moselle, as had been arranged at Paris after the signature of the treaty. It was agreed that a claim for the payment of 5 million francs by the inhabitants of the territories which the Prussians were to evacuate would be settled *à l'amiable*. The next day, a further meeting took place, at which a protocol was drawn up laying down the measures by which the union of Belgium and Holland and the transfer of the provisional government of the countries on the right of the Maas to the Sovereign Prince were to be effected.

The Allies declared that they had decided on the union "by virtue of their right of conquest of Belgium" [2].

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, June 14th (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, p. 32).

[2] In "*Luxemburg and Limburg*", no. 27 of the Handbooks prepared under the direction of the historical section of the Foreign Office (London 1920), it is said, (p. 9): "That that bald and almost brutal statement.. was due to Prussian pressure and instigation, is proved by a study of the diplomatic correspondence of this time, and by the fact that the Provisional Government of Belgium had been in the hands of Prussian Commissioners". The fact that these words were written in 1917 may explain, but cannot justify, them. There is not a single known proof that Prussia was particularly responsible for this phraseology.

This definitely ruled out of court any consultation of the Belgians, not only as to the disposal of their country, but even as to the mode of union. The Allies further declared that the union was "to effect the most perfect amalgamation between the two countries". This was the condemnation of all federalism, and of any idea of resuscitating the privileges and particularism of the Belgian provinces; it was the recognition of the Sovereign Prince's centralised state. The way in which these aims could best be realised was by the adoption, as a basis for the re-union, "of the points put forward by Lord Clancarty and agreed to by the Sovereign Prince of Holland". The fiction that the arrangement did not originate with the Sovereign Prince was thus solemnly upheld. But the Allies took care, at the same time, to assure themselves that their own interests were not overlooked. They agreed to the transfer of territories only on the understanding that England should obtain the consent of the Sovereign Prince to the conditions they were putting forward. "The demands of the Powers on Holland and Belgium", stated the Protocol, "shall be the object of a separate transaction with the Prince of Orange, to whom England shall extend her mediation [1]".

The Protocol was not immediately communicated to the Sovereign Prince. Nesselrode had only signed it subject to the approval of the Emperor of Russia and this approval could not be immediately obtained because Alexander was not in London. Two days after the signature Castlereagh told the Dutch Ambassador that the Sovereign Prince was to be appointed provisional governor of Belgium. He said that a few days before the opening of the general congress at Vienna a preliminary treaty might be signed, by which the Allies, disposing of

[1] This, of course, was the real reason of the insistence upon the Allies' right to dispose of Belgium by conquest. The Protocol of the conference of June 21st, 1814, in Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, taken from *F. O. Continent*, II, 5. In Hertslett, *Map of Europe*, I, p. 40–41, it is given as signed at Vienna on June 14th. It bears the signatures of Nesselrode, Hardenberg, Metternich, and Castlereagh, who were all in London at that date.

Belgium by right of conquest, would definitely hand the country to the Sovereign Prince. In this way, added Castlereagh, whatever was decided as to the precise mode of union could not possibly form the basis of a grievance against the Prince[1]. It is obvious that Castlereagh was thinking of the phraseology of the Protocol and that he wished to keep its existence secret for the time being.

The Sovereign Prince, at that moment, was again creating difficulties by refusing to keep in the background. He and his Foreign Minister, the punctilious and unbending Van Nagell, sent courier after courier to Fagel with complaints about the behaviour of the Prussians in Belgium and about the general situation in that country. They taught nothing new to Castlereagh, who was well informed by Johnson, and who was occupied by many other Continental complications and by parliamentary debates. He was not always able to conceal his annoyance at these perpetual attempts to obtain from him definite undertakings and an immediate intervention in the affairs of the Netherlands. On the 25th he came as near losing his patience as he was able to do. In a conversation with the Dutch Ambassador, although maintaining his usual suavity of demeanour, he made no effort to conceal that the Dutch were becoming very tiresome. To show how much he was doing on behalf of the Dutch he even told Fagel of the existence of the protocol and repeated the assurance he had given a few days earlier[2]. It is an amusing illustration of the Dutch Foreign Minister's tact that when he heard from Fagel about this he sent some further details and a collection of cuttings from Belgian newspapers to substantiate his complaints[3].

While still waiting for the sanction of the Emperor Alexander, Castlereagh decided to take a step which would make it clear to the whole world that the rupture of the engagement between Princess Charlotte and the

[1] Fagel's report of the conversation with Castlereagh to Van Nagell, June 23rd 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 611–13).
[2] H. Fagel to Van Nagell, June 25th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 618–9).
[3] Van Nagell to Fagel, July 1st 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 625–8).

Hereditary Prince of Orange, which had just occurred, made no difference to the close relationship between England and the House of Orange. He obtained the agreement of the Allied Ministers to giving the provisional administration of Belgium to the Sovereign Prince without further delay, and a few days after he had communicated this decision to Clancarty, he also announced England's intention of appointing the Hereditary Prince, subject to his father's approval, to the command of the English and Dutch troops which were to remain in Belgium until the final settlement of Vienna[1]. But neither of these arrangements pleased the Prince. He considered it beneath his dignity to be a *locum tenens* in Belgium while in Holland he was a sovereign, and he disliked the idea of being only a civil administrator in a country where the military power was in the hands of his son.

A greater shock awaited the Prince. As soon as Alexander had signed the London Protocol of June 21st, Castlereagh sent a copy to Clancarty, in order to obtain the Sovereign Prince's consent to its terms, which the Allies desired before they would allow the transfer of powers in Belgium[2]. The Prince, who had been urging that the union between the two countries should take place without any consultation of his future subjects, had never meant that he too should be left out of court. He declined to admit any direct or indirect demands at the expense of Holland. To Clancarty he explained all his objections in detail, while at the same time Van Nagell wrote most biting comments to the Dutch Ambassador in London. The last paragraph of the protocol, according to Van Nagell, really meant that by right of conquest the Allies were giving Belgium to Holland, and that in return for the honour of becoming a gift, Belgium would have to give the Allies whatever might be determined at Vienna[3]!

[1] Castlereagh to Clancarty, June 26th (*Ged.* VII, p. 153); H. Fagel to Van Nagell, July 1st 1814 (*ibid.*, p. 624).
[2] Castlereagh to Clancarty, July 3rd (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, II, pp. 33–34).
[3] Clancarty to Castlereagh July 7th—8th (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*,

Clancarty endeavoured to calm the Sovereign Prince and his Minister, who also strongly objected to a proposal made by Castlereagh that during the time the occupation of Belgium continued the Dutch Government should be responsible for the maintenance of the British and Hanoverian troops in that country. After two days of repeated conferences the Dutch still maintained their positive refusal to sign the protocol, although they were naturally quite willing to accept the eight articles by themselves. Finally Clancarty agreed to ask for further elucidations from his court.

In London, meanwhile, the relations between Castlereagh and the Dutch Ambassador were becoming very tense. There, negotiations had also started about the colonies. But Van Nagell's instructions to Fagel were merely to ask for an unconditional return of all the conquered colonies, an attitude which made the position of Fagel impossible. He realised the situation infinitely better than his Minister. "In all your correspondence, official as well as private", complained Fagel, "there reigns a tone of exasperation and reproach which is beginning to be found offensive here, because it is considered that no ground had been given for such reproaches". Matters came to a head when Castlereagh heard how the Dutch were taking the London Protocol. "To part with as little possible, and to describe that little as an injury, whilst extensive acquisitions are made only an argument for further demands, appears to constitute the principles of M. de Nagell's diplomacy", was Castlereagh's comment. Castlereagh had now completely lost patience with the Dutch. The Sovereign Prince, he said, considered it beneath his dignity to accept a position similar to that accepted by other Allied Sovereigns in the re-conquered territories of Germany and Italy! To appoint the Sovereign Prince governor of Belgium was to show that occupation was of a political, and not merely of a military and transient, nature. The Prince distrusted the intentions of

II, pp. 35–40); Van Nagell to H. Fagel, July 8th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 633–5).

England, although she was undertaking quite voluntarily the repayment of part of the Russian debt to Dutch bankers! It was clear that the Dutch were in a truculent mood, and had to be brought back to a due sense of their position. The remedy was at hand. They had only to be shown what it would mean to them if Great Britain withdrew her powerful support. On July 15th Castlereagh told Fagel that in view of the Dutch pretensions and of the attitude adopted by the Dutch government in regard to the Southern Netherlands, he was compelled to refer the colonial question to Vienna, where it could be discussed before all the Powers [1].

This was about the last thing the Dutch wanted. To have the whole of their former colonial Empire thrown upon the open market, where it might excite the greed of the Allies, and be utilised in the general scheme of compensations, was a risky proceeding. But it should not be thought that the British would have welcomed this solution any more than the Dutch. They had refused, from the beginning, to place the conquered Dutch colonies in the common pool, and had persistently declared that the question of their restitution was a private affair between Holland and England. Castlereagh was aware of the fact that European opinion was not favourably impressed by the British desire to retain the Dutch colonies. He cannot possibly have wished to make Alexander, Frederick William, or Metternich the arbiters of the future of the East Indian Islands. He must have known all the time that his bluff would not be called.

The gesture, at any rate, was entirely successful. As soon as he heard how his refusal to sign the protocol had been taken in England, the Sovereign Prince gave way on all points. On July 21st he signed an act of accession to the London Protocol, and the following day a copy of this act was handed to the diplomatic representatives of all the Allied Powers at The Hague [2]. At the same time, Fagel

[1] Castlereagh to Clancarty, July 14th (*Grondwet* II, p. 42); H. Fagel to Van Nagell, July 15th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 641–44).

[2] Clancarty to Castlereagh, July 19th, July 22nd; Clancarty to Van

was instructed to request that the colonial negotiations in London should be resumed, and as greater latitude was this time given to him, he speedily brought the matter to a conclusion. Soon enough the breach was healed, at least on the surface. Once more Clancarty became the Sovereign Prince's authoritative adviser. When the Prince hesitated whether he should go to Brussels himself or send a deputy, Clancarty favoured the first alternative while the Prussian Ambassador advised against the journey. Clancarty's advice prevailed, and Brockhausen remarked to Hardenberg that the Prince acted always in agreement with England, whose Ambassador directed everything. Brockhausen admitted that important motives attached the Prince to this system, but thought that he should have remembered all Prussia had done for him[1]. The motives which, for the present, still attached the Sovereign Prince to the British system were, indeed, powerful enough. The rupture of the engagement, the retention of valuable colonies, and the disappointment in Belgium might rankle, but, at the moment, Prussia was more than a competitor: she was a real danger. Against the menace from that quarter only one safeguard existed: the friendship of Great Britain.

On August 1st the Sovereign Prince arrived in Brussels and took over the provisional government from General Vincent. The question of the extension of Dutch territory was being solved in the typically leisurely and gradual manner of the post-Napoleonic era. As far as the Maas, the extension was a certainty. The modality of the final union had been settled by the eight articles and the London Protocol. Only the question of frontiers remained. This was no longer primarily a matter of erecting a strong barrier against France, but of adjusting the conflicting claims of members of the Alliance in quest of territorial aggrandisement. In the next chapter we must see what part Britain played in the solution of this question.

Nagell, July 20th; Sovereign Prince to Van Nagell, July 20th 1814 (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, II, pp. 42–47).

[1] Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, II, pp. 47–48; *Ged.* VII, pp. 304–5.

CHAPTER V

THE FRONTIER OF THE NETHERLANDS

A. Prussian Ambitions between Maas and Rhine: The French Danger recedes into the Background
B. Castlereagh's Continental Schemes: The Problem of the Netherlands loses its Importance in his Eyes, but is viewed differently by the Cabinet in London
C. The Netherlands and the Germanic Confederation
D. Castlereagh withdraws his Support from Prussia in the Saxon Question: Further Sacrifices at the Expense of the Netherlands required in Consequence
E. The Port of Antwerp — The Settlement of the Russian Debt
F. The Defence of the Netherlands: Conflicting Views of Great Britain and Russia
G. Territorial Readjustments as a Result of the Hundred Days

A. — *Prussian Ambitions between Maas and Rhine: The French Danger recedes into the Background*

With the approach of the Congress, where all affairs that had been left unsettled at the time of the Peace of Paris were to be finally arranged, it was becoming evident that the disappearance of Napoleon had in no way simplified the problems which confronted Castlereagh. The question of the Netherlands was more than half solved. The union of north and south could be allowed to take its natural course, passing almost imperceptibly from a provisional administration of Belgium by the Sovereign Prince to the complete amalgamation laid down in the eight articles. In that respect much more had been given to the House of Orange than might have been expected at the end of 1813. But it seemed unlikely that the disposal of the territories beyond the Maas would be

equally favourable to the wishes of the Sovereign Prince. For here every concession made to the Netherlands would take effect at the expense of the Prussians, who had, by the beginning of August 1814, definitely staked a claim in these countries. And Prussia, as it happened, deserved special consideration in the eyes of Castlereagh. He was as preoccupied with the problem of European equilibrium as ever. France, however, was much less likely, now that she seemed to be settling down under the Bourbons, to upset the balance. Russia, with her immense territorial ambitions, her great army, and her growing jealousy of Great Britain, was fast becoming the principal threat to the peace of Europe. Austria and Prussia had to be supported, and especially Prussia, who had lost more and who had to be dissuaded from giving her sanction to Alexander's Polish plans. This is why Castlereagh upheld Prussia's ambitions in Saxony, and why he took extreme care not to offend her susceptibilities by an excess of gener osity to the Dutch ally who, after all, had to be satisfied with whatever frontier was allotted to him.

We know already that the Prussians had not at once conceived the ambitious plans of aggrandisement in the Southern Netherlands for which they eventually stood out. But, whether they wanted them for themselves or for the purpose of eventual exchanges, they were averse from the beginning from allowing the Dutch to enter into possession of any place beyond the Maas which had belonged to the Dutch Republic before the French period. The Prussian Government itself may have acceded to the current view that Holland had liberated herself and was therefore entitled automatically to recover every part of her ancient territory. But difficulties were continually being made not only by Prussian generals but also by Prussian administrators, and the government was either unable or unwilling to keep them in check. The British, on the other hand, never hesitated in affirming the right of the Dutch to recover all their former possessions.

As the French were evacuating old Dutch territory, the Dutch hastened to take over its administration. Two

Dutchman, Bangeman Huygens and Van Hugenpoth, were appointed early in 1814 to be commissioners of the Sovereign Prince in the so-called Generality Lands, the countries which before 1795 had belonged to the Dutch Republic without possessing self-government. On February 4th they started upon their task in the territories beyond the Maas. Von Sack, Governor in the name of the Allies of the departments of the Roer, the Ourthe, and the Meuse Inférieure, made numerous difficulties. There were repeated complaints that the Prussians were occupying old Dutch territories [1]. In particular as regards Maastricht, where under the old régime the sovereignty of the Dutch States General had been restricted by the fact that the Prince Bishop of Liège possessed the right of appointing one half of the magistrates of the town, von Sack was unwilling to admit the Dutch commissioners otherwise than as the representatives of one of the Allied Powers. He considered that the eventual occupation of Maastricht, which was still in the hands of the French, could only take place in the name of all the Allies. He denied that the convention of April 23rd 1814 between France and the Allies, which stipulated that all fortified places still held by the French were to be handed over to the Sovereign of the territory where they were situated, applied to Maastricht. But the Dutch point of view, supported to the fullest extent by British diplomacy, was accepted by the Allies, and by May 1st von Sack had received orders from the Commission for the Administration of Occupied Territories to evacuate Maastricht [2].

The difficulties created by the Prussians were not over. When, as a result of arrangements made in London, the Prussian armies retired across the Maas, von Sack refused to evacuate Liège, which was on the left bank of

[1] E.g. *Ged.* VII, p. 503.

[2] *Ged.* VII, p. 554. On April 24th 1814, Castlereagh had written to Clancarty: "Your Lordship will suggest to the Prince of Orange the expediency of forming immediate arrangements for occupying such of the ceded places as actually belonged to Holland in the year 1792, and which are considered by the Allied Powers as forming an integral part of H.R.H.'s dominions" (*ibid.*, pp. 108–9).

the river, until Venloo and Wijk, which were on ther ight, had been delivered to him by the Dutch. In other old Dutch possessions on the right bank he forbade the local authorities to maintain any kind of relationship with the Dutch Government [1]. As soon as he heard of this new development, Castlereagh wrote to Hardenberg asking that the Prussian troops should be ordered to leave Liège and should not attempt to occupy old Dutch territory. To Castlereagh, it seemed established beyond discussion that, independently of their situation, all ancient Dutch territories must automatically revert to Holland [2]. Moreover he remembered that the question had been discussed between the Ministers of the four Allied Powers at their conference of May 31st. They had not deemed it necessary to insert in the treaty what appeared to them a matter of commonsense. The quarrel continued through the month of September, when further correspondence passed between Castlereagh and Hardenberg. Metternich told Van Spaen that he agreed with the Dutch view, but as late as November and December 1814 new vexatious measures were taken by von Sack, who in the middle of December attempted to collect a salt tax at Venloo and at Wijk, and to levy troops at Stevenswaart [3].

These attempts to obtain a hold over all Dutch possessions on the right bank of the Maas were not mere instances of the exaggerated zeal of local officials. The plan submitted by Hardenberg to the Allies in Paris during the peace negotiations [4] took the Maas from Mook down to Liège as the frontier of the Netherlands, whence a convex line was to go along Bastogne to Luxemburg and the old French frontier. The Prussians aspired to the possession

[1] Memorandum of Falck, Aug. 7th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 658) Clancarty to Castlereagh, Aug. 8th (*ibid.*, pp. 174–5).

[2] Castlereagh to Clancarty, Aug. 14th (*Ged.* VII, p. 176); Clancarty to von Sack, Aug. 8th 1814 (*ibid.*, pp. 668–9).

[3] Van Nagell's protest of Aug. 16th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 667–8); von Sack's answer of Aug. 19th (*ibid.* p. 670); H. Fagel to Van Nagell, Sept 2nd (*ibid.* p. 677); Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Sept. 7th (*ibid.* p. 678), Nov. 11th (*ibid.* p. 710), Nov. 30th (*ibid.* p. 712); Van Nagell to Clancarty, Dec. 12th (*ibid.* p. 215).

[4] Above, p. 245.

of the Belgian territories east of that line, and they came thus in direct conflict with the wishes of the Dutch government. Yet during the period that elapsed between the signature of the Peace of Paris and the opening of the Congress of Vienna, these wishes underwent a process of gradual reduction, as it was becoming more and more evident that they could be but very partially realised. By May 31st. Falck, while in Paris, had put before Castlereagh two alternative plans [1]. According to the first, Holland was to acquire the whole *Département de la Roer*, as well as a zone north of a line which would have joined the south western corner of that department to the town of Dinant. The other alternative was that of joining to Holland all the nine provinces which formed the Southern Netherlands. The first plan was that which the Sovereign Prince preferred. One of the arguments with which he tried to impress the British was that it would prevent Prussia's hampering British trade with Upper Germany and Switzerland, by becoming the mistress of both banks of the Rhine [2].

Very little attention was paid to these Dutch plans and requests. The Allies had more important business to discuss: arrangements in Germany and in Poland almost monopolised their attention. When Castlereagh left London at the beginning of September to travel to Vienna, he was handed a new plan by the Dutch Secretary of State Falck [3]. This document began by recapitulating the Sovereign Prince's wish to obtain the Rhine as far as its junction with the Moselle for frontier. But, realising the practical difficulties of the arrangement, the Prince suggested an alternative and less ambitious scheme. He asked to be given at least the whole Principality of Liège, and furthermore the ancient provinces of Limburg and Luxemburg. He also requested that a zone along the right bank of the Maas from Rolduc

[1] *Ged.* VII, pp. 132–3.

[2] Sovereign Prince to Van Nagell, May 14th (*Ged.* VII, p. 575).

[3] Falck to Castlereagh, Aug. 24th 1814 (Colenbrander, *Grondwet*, II. pp. 51–54).

to Mook, approximately one league in width, limited by a ridge of hills, should be given to Holland, so that it would be the sole possessor of the Maas, and have at its disposal a military road along the right bank. There were further suggestions of a similar zone along the Moselle, which would allow free communication between Holland and the Nassau lands, the return of which was to be a condition of the Prince's acquiescence in this restricted scheme.

Castlereagh, however, was losing his absorbing interest in the affairs of the Netherlands. With every step almost that carried him farther away from home he was developing a new European consciousness which somewhat estranged him from those members of the Government who stayed in England. They were frightened, more than once, by the part he played during the following months. Their attitude remained more narrowly English, and they continued therefore to give more thought to the Netherlands. Presently we shall even see Castlereagh defending the measures he was supporting in Vienna by pointing to their utility from the point of view of British policy in the Netherlands. The first indication of a change of attitude on the part of Castlereagh is given by the view he took of the French danger. At the time of the negotiations over the eight articles, one of the series of requests and complaints which arrived in a ceaseless flow from The Hague had been that the French were intriguing in Belgium [1]. Due notice had been taken of this information, and before the end of July the British Government made representations in Paris, as a result of which Talleyrand promised that the French would refrain from further attempts to obtain support from their friends in the Southern Netherlands [2]. This did not prevent Talleyrand from following Belgian affairs with the keenest interest. In August he told Stuart that the situation was such that the annexation of Belgium by Holland might be anything but a

[1] Van Nagell to H. Fagel, June 15th, 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 598); June 21st (*ibid.* p. 611); July 1st (*ibid.* p. 626).
[2] H. Fagel to Sovereign Prince, July 26th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 651).

success. He even hinted that Austria might after all want to keep Belgium in order to use it as an indemnity to the Queen of Etruria [1]. Yet Talleyrand had no desire to do anything that might displease Castlereagh. The two Foreign Ministers, who agreed in their desire to import more moderation into European counsels, were moving closer towards each other. At the beginning of September Talleyrand told Castlereagh that he was pleased with the Dutch and Swedish settlements, because they afforded a salutary influence over the Russian counsels [2].

The entente which was slowly coming into being between Great Britain and France was also colouring Castlereagh's views. During his stay at Brussels he had made an excursion to Antwerp. The comments he addressed to his Prime Minister are highly enlightening. Only a complete betrayal of all his former professions could have caused him to modify his view that this vital spot should on no account belong to France [3]. It is natural, therefore, that he should have expressed his delight in regard to the incalculable benefits gained by Great Britain through the separation of the Scheldt from France, and that he should have manifested his deep conviction that there was "no reasonable expense which the British Parliament should hesitate to incur" in order to confirm this state of affairs.

The term used by Castlereagh, "to confirm that position to a secondary and friendly power," is nothing less than a programme. But after these orthodox declarations Castlereagh proceeded to quote the opinion of Wellington, who at that time was also in the Netherlands and who was in favour of preserving Antwerp for military purposes. In cautious terms Castlereagh expressed his agreement with the views of the General. The best security for Britain, he thought, was to exclude a first rate power from the sovereignty of the river. But a demolition of the naval basins might prove impossible without doing

[1] Stuart to Castlereagh (from Paris), Aug. 9th (*Ged.* VII, p. 175).
[2] Castlereagh to Liverpool (from Geneva), Sept. 3rd (*Ged.* VII, p. 180).
[3] *Ibid.*

harm to the commercial prospects of Antwerp. And would it really prove effectual if France ever re-occupied the river? Terneuzen and other places on the bank of the Scheldt would provide strategic positions even superior to those of Antwerp. Castlereagh suggested referring the question to a commission at Vienna. Like Wellington, he apparently preferred to put his faith in a strong barrier of fortresses. Nevertheless, this meant resting satisfied with a single guarantee instead of a double one. The French danger was reducing itself from the size of a nightmare to that of an ordinary preoccupation that could be envisaged in broad daylight. At home, however, Antwerp remained the perennial threat to the very existence of the state. As soon as he heard of Castlereagh's views, Bathurst wrote a strongly worded protest against any weakening on the subject of Antwerp. To allow it to continue as a place of naval equipment was merely to invite the French to invade Flanders [1]. Here, then, was a first divergence between Castlereagh and the colleagues he had left behind, and more were to follow.

B. — *Castlereagh's Continental Schemes: The Problem of the Netherlands loses its Importance in his Eyes, but is viewed as before by the Cabinet in London*

In the course of September the Ministers and representatives of the Powers began to gather in Vienna, and in the middle of the month Castlereagh, Metternich, Hardenberg, and Nesselrode started their preliminary discussions. The Sovereign Prince had sent two representatives to the Congress. Van Spaen, who had already followed the Headquarters of the Allies during the last campaign and who had represented the Prince at the Paris negotiations, was especially entrusted with all the interests of the United Netherlands, while von Gagern as before had as his particular task to attend to the Prince's affairs connected with the German Empire and with the interests of the

[1] Bathurst to Castlereagh, Sept. 9th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 181).

House of Nassau [1]. The attitude of the Ministers of the different Powers to the question of the Netherlands, which at that moment was of an entirely subsidiary nature, affords an interesting illustration of the divergences and cross currents which existed in Vienna. Before Hardenberg's departure from Berlin, the Dutch Minister Perponcher had tried to discuss with him the territories beyond the Maas. But Hardenberg had refused to be drawn, and seemed decided to negotiate exclusively with the British Government about Dutch affairs [2]. He realised, of course, that Great Britain had much to ask and would be inclined to give liberally in consequence, whereas if concessions had eventually to be made, it would be more useful for Prussia to ingratiate herself with Great Gritain than with Holland.

With Russia, the Sovereign Prince would appear to have had more success. If we may believe Brockhausen, the Prussian Minister at The Hague, the Russian Emperor had given the Sovereign Prince a positive promise that he would interest himself on all occasions in the Prince's desire for an increase in territory, and had professed his conviction that Holland ought to be enabled to resist by herself the first onslaught of France. We have seen in various instances Russia's desire to oust Great Britain from the position of preponderance which she occupied in Holland, and it would be natural that Alexander should try to assume the role of patron of the Netherlands. He had another reason for wishing to strengthen the international position of Holland, for, according to Brockhausen, he wanted her to form a counterpoise to the maritime power of England. "Hence," wrote the Prussian Minister, "the offer of mediation in order to terminate the war with America, whose power he would not like to be crushed" [3]. The idea that the Netherlands would help to

[1] Instruction to the Sovereign Prince's plenipotentiaries at Vienna, Aug. 10th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 663–4).

[2] Perponcher to Van Nagell, Sept. 1814 (undated, received Sept. 16th, *Ged.* VII, p. 678).

[3] Von Brockhausen to the King of Prussia, July 14th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 302–3).

form a counterpoise to Great Britain's maritime empire had also occurred to Metternich, who, as early as March 1814, had told the French Royalist emissary de Vitrolles that on land the restored Netherlands would form a barrier against France and be her natural enemy, but that at sea they would be an ally of France, and that this combination held promises for the stability of nations and of governments [1].

It should not be thought, however, that Austria or Russia was prepared to assist in every measure that might conceivably strengthen the Netherlands. Alexander would only do such things as might give him personal credit and place the Dutch under a sense of obligation, while the Austrians, who were much more interested in German questions, considered that the primary use to be made of the territories on the right bank of the Maas was to satisfy the Prussians in order to make them more modest in Germany. Before the end of September the opinion was held in Austrian diplomatic circles that England's pretensions on behalf of the House of Orange were excessive, and that she would have to abate some of them [2]. The Dutch representatives, however, were not so convinced that the British supported them through thick and thin. Although their instructions did not specifically order them to work in close collaboration with the British delegates [3], the latter took it for granted that the Dutch should continually defer to them. On September 24th already the two plenipotentiaries of the Sovereign Prince visited Castlereagh. They found him still rather uncertain and wavering as to the final frontier of the Netherlands, and not provided with good maps [4]. On October 6th they had another and lengthy conversation with Castlereagh and Clancarty,

[1] March 12th. (De Vitrolles, *Mémoires*, I, p. 93).

[2] Gentz, *Dépêches inédites aux Hospodars de Valachie*, I, p. 101. Gentz, an Austrian Foreign Office official, usually expressed Metternich's views in his correspondence.

[3] When Robert Fagel was appointed Minister in Paris, he was instructed to do nothing without Wellington's participation. (Hereditary Prince of Orange to Wellington, Sept. 26th 1814, *Ged.* VII, p. 185).

[4] Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Sept. 27th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 692–3).

which, as they reported, was not of a nature to please the Sovereign Prince. The British representatives made it clear that the Powers appeared agreed upon the necessity of placing not only Prussia, but also Bavaria in direct contact with France, and that for this reason Bavaria was to be given Luxemburg and a solid slice of the Southern Netherlands.

The policy of investing yet a third state with the function of sentry along the north eastern frontier of France, and a relatively weak power at that, was for Castlereagh another sacrifice of former principles. It was the result of complicated negotiations with the other powers, and especially with Prussia. On September 28th Hardenberg had submitted to Castlereagh a memorandum on the defence of the Netherlands and Northern Germany[1], which proposed that the Netherlands should be limited by the Maas and that the Sovereign Prince should give to Prussia his hereditary Nassau lands on the right bank of the Rhine. In return for this Prussia, who considered that she had claims upon the Principality of Liège because it had belonged to the German Empire, would allow the Sovereign Prince to have the part of that principality situated on the left bank of the Maas (which, be it noted, was given to him already by the Peace of Paris) as well as a rayon on the right bank of the river round the town of Liège. Prussia would moreover cede the part of Prussian Gelders which lay on the left bank of the Maas, and a margin along the right bank of that river. These proposals were based upon the argument that Holland could not possibly defend herself against an onslaught by France, and that further to extend her frontiers would only increase her vulnerability. A considerable portion of territory on the left bank of the Rhine ought to be given to Bavaria, if she were willing to accept it, and the remainder would go to Prussia. These two powers would then both be interested in the defence of the barrier against France alongside the Netherlands.

Castlereagh was of course not ignorant of the fact that

[1] *Ged.* VII, pp. 187–193.

these suggestions were entirely due to Prussia's desire to find an equivalent for the advantages which she wanted to withhold from Bavaria, in particular for the fortified town of Mayence. But he was attracted by the prospect of obtaining the support of a military power like Bavaria on the left flank of the northern barrier, so as to present a much more imposing front against France than would be the case if Holland spread out as far as the Moselle. He thought that some subsidiary modifications might be introduced into this plan which fell so far short of the expectations of the Sovereign Prince.

In reporting these proceedings to Wellington [1], Castlereagh wrote that both he and Cathcart would prefer "to press what was most acceptable to the Prince of Orange." As far as Castlereagh was concerned, it may be doubted whether he was so desirous of obliging the Sovereign Prince. For he immediately continued by declaring that the new scheme was in conformity with Pitt's plan of 1805, "which was to tempt Prussia to put herself forward on the left bank of the Rhine, more in military contact with France." He admitted there was a danger in giving a peculiarly military power so extensive a frontier in common with the Netherlands, but he pleaded that the danger was not very considerable.

Co-operation with Prussia was still the primary consideration in Castlereagh's mind. "Two alternatives alone presented themselves for consideration," he wrote to Wellington in defence of his policy, "a union of the two great German powers, supported by Great Britain, and thus combining the minor states of Germany, together with Holland, in an intermediary system between Russia and France — or a union of Austria, France, and the Southern States against the Northern Powers, with Russia and Prussia in close alliance." Castlereagh would have preferred to see no combinations of this nature at all, but he feared that one of the two alternatives was inevitable owing to the tone and conduct of Russia. In that case, the

[1] To whom he submitted them in his capacity of military expert. (Oct. 1st. 1814, *Ged.* VII, pp. 193–5).

latter alternative seemed to him the more objectionable. "If adopted in order to control Russian power, and, with this view, should it be supported by Great Britain, it rendered Holland and the Low Countries dependent on France for their support, instead of having Prussia and the Northern States of Germany as their natural protectors. It presented the further inconvenience, in case of war, of exposing all the recent cessions by France to re-occupation by French armies...." [1].

Clancarty was far from sharing Castlereagh's opinion that the Prussian scheme was full of attractive points and that only a few minor adjustments in favour of the Sovereign Prince were necessary. He strongly hoped to be able to prevent its being finally accepted and submitted Hardenberg's memorandum to a searching criticism, remarking that whereas the Allies had agreed at Troyes that the House of Orange should acquire at least a population of 605,513 beyond the Maas, the Prussian project only provided for an increase of 171,108. He also commented upon the fact that even for this restricted acquisition the House of Orange was expected to give compensation to the amount of 115,000 souls, so that the new gain would only amount to 56,408. In a letter to the Sovereign Prince, Clancarty said that the Prussian note, which was based upon alleged military grounds, was in reality inspired by different but obvious considerations [2]. Clancarty's opinions, like those of Castlereagh, were coloured by the specialised task of the previous months. He had lived with the court of the Sovereign Prince of Orange, shared its expectations and its disappointments. If criticism, especially during the first months of his embassy, came easily to him, the measure of approval he had been able to give to the management of affairs at The Hague had gradually increased. He had seen the Prussians at work in Belgium, and had followed the course of their

[1] Oct. 25th (Webster, *Br. Dipl.*, p. 218).

[2] Clancarty's note on Hardenberg's *Projet* (*Ged.* VII, pp. 195–7); Clancarty to Sovereign Prince, Oct. 27th (*ibid.*, pp. 198–9).

disingenuous efforts to capture old Dutch territory [1]. Castlereagh, during the same period, had proceeded from one discovery to another; he was, in particular, still fascinated by the novel conception that, apart from theBritish point of view, there existed a Continental outlook which was not only worth study, but frequently even susceptible of adoption. It is not surprising that some time afterwards Van Spaen wrote to his Foreign Minister that in Vienna Clancarty was a real treasure to the Dutch [2].

Like Clancarty, Wellington differed from Castlereagh. He agreed that from the strategic point of view the Netherlands should not have a frontier which they would be unable to defend. But Bavaria appeared to him unsuited as a defender of the barrier because it was not sufficiently strong and had not proved very friendly to the British system in the past. That the Sovereign Prince should be deprived of his hereditary Nassau lands struck Wellington as unfair. But he was also strongly of opinion that a division of the Southern Netherlands, which would be opposed to the wishes of the inhabitants, was undesirable. He therefore suggested that a horizontal line should be drawn from Huy to the Rhine, the territories north of this line being given to the Sovereign Prince, those south of the line down to the French frontier going to Prussia. Wellington's views agreed with those of the Sovereign Prince, and he held that if the frontier given to him were unsatisfactory, the Prince had better refuse any increase of territory in the Southern Netherlands [3].

[1] Clancarty had also been favourably impressed by the first steps taken by the Sovereign Prince in Belgium (Clancarty to Hamilton, from Brussels, Aug. 19th 1814, *Ged.* VII, p. 178). On the other hand, the Prussian encroachments were still continuing. On Nov. 11th von Sack occupied the village of Oeffelt in Dutch Brabant. Clancarty wrote about this to Van Nagell on Nov. 27th: "Strange that a Sovereign who seems to grovel at the feet of others should nevertheless avail himself of a little local power to infringe the rights of his peaceable neighbours" (*ibid.*, p. 214).

[2] "Lord Clancarty is greatly incensed against the Prussians. He will influence Lord Castlereagh who until now had been rather too favourably inclined towards the system of the Court of Berlin" (Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Nov. 26th 1814, *Ged.* VII, p. 710).

[3] Wellington to Castlereagh, Oct. 17th (*Ged.* VII, p. 201); Oct. 27th (*ibid*, p. 206); Robert Fagel to Van Nagell, Oct. 27th (*ibid.* pp. 707–8); Sovereign Prince to Clancarty, Nov. 11th (*ibid.* pp. 210–11).

Liverpool, to whom Wellington had imparted his considerations, replied that as far as he was capable of forming an opinion, it entirely coincided with that of Wellington [1]. So far did Liverpool's revulsion from Castlereagh's newfangled Continental ideas go, that he looked back with a sigh to the British scheme of November 1813, which was the restoration of the major part of the Southern Netherlands to Austria. As this idea, which he had always preferred, was impracticable under the circumstances he thought the best way of affording adequate security to the Netherlands was to bring Prussia in contact with France. Luxemburg he wished to give to Prussia, but, if this were impossible, to the Sovereign Prince rather than to Bavaria. Liège and Juliers he thought ought to be Dutch. The only other personality whose views in foreign affairs had weight in the counsels of Great Britain was Bathurst. He too was far from pleased with the new developments: to him as to Liverpool France throughout remained the real danger and was the only object to be considered in arranging the disposal of the territory beyond the Maas. Liverpool, Bathurst, Wellington, and Clancarty all showed the same impotent disagreement, while Castlereagh went his lonely way.

There is something pathetic about Castlereagh's endeavours to achieve a synthesis of his policy and that of his traditionalist colleagues. In order to kindle their interest, he tried to prove to them that his efforts to form a Germanic bloc against Russia were of particular importance from the point of view of Great Britain's interests on the side of Holland. If a concert could be established between Austria and Prussia, argued Castlereagh, so that the Netherlands were "covered by a German league," Great Britain could show her resentment against Russia's injustice towards Poland by refusing to come to an arrangement regarding Russia's debt to the Amsterdam bankers. Castlereagh knew that this argument would

[1] Liverpool to Wellington, Nov. 1st (*Ged.* VII, p. 209).

have a double attraction to his colleagues: it would allay the Opposition's criticism of the treatment of Poland, which at a later stage necessitated his academic declaration in favour of Polish independence, and it would diminish the bill which Vansittart would have to present to Parliament. The displeasure of Russia, was Castlereagh's submission, could not affect the Sovereign Prince if he was covered by the German League. But if the Russian Emperor triumphed in Poland and then disunited Germany, Holland would be at his mercy and England would have to yield in the matter of the debt [1].

C. — *The Netherlands and the Germanic Confederation*

It should not be thought that in the meantime the Sovereign Prince adopted a passive attitude. If he was not consulted, he was nevertheless kept well posted. Apart from the reports of his plenipotentiaries, which naturally only contained second hand information, he received extensive communications from Clancarty; while Wellington also corresponded with him. The Prince, meanwhile, was indulging in his favourite occupation of memorialising. Maps and schemes were continually being despatched to Vienna, arguments old and new were marshalled against the Prussian proposals. But as none of them carried any weight in the debates taking place in Vienna, there is no need to examine their contents. It is sufficient to recall the fact that the Prince expressed his agreement with Wellington and his frontier from Huy to the Rhine. On one point, however, the Prince's views had importance, even in the eyes of Castlereagh. When pleading for a strong frontier, by which he meant a frontier in agreement with his own views, the Prince pointed out that the stronger the Netherlands were, the less would they be in need of the protection afforded by membership of the Germanic confederation. And in arguing thus he touched

[1] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Nov. 11th, 1814 (Webster, *Brit. Dipl.*, pp. 229–33).

a spot which was still uncovered by Castlereagh's new armour of a Continental Knight Errant [1].

Castlereagh took a real interest in the plans for the formation of a confederation of Germanic states which were being studied in Vienna by a special commission. Although he carefully abstained from any participation in the discussions, he strongly desired their success, because the establishment of a confederation coincided with his views as to the advantages of forming a Central European bloc against the double danger from France and from Russia. The Prussian scheme for forming a federal army naturally appealed to him specially. But his friendly interest did not go so far as to wish the Netherlands, Great Britain's own reserve, to be included in the Confederation, for this arrangement would very nearly amount to the placing of the Netherlands, undivided, in the hands of a strong military power. The Prussians, on the other hand, would have welcomed the strengthening of the Germanic Confederation, where they hoped to play a predominating part, by the inclusion of the Netherlands. In the plan for future frontiers of Europe communicated by Hardenberg to the Allies during the peace negotiations in April, the suggestion had been made that the Netherlands should be invited to form a perpetual alliance with the Germanic Confederation [2]. At that time, when the views of Prussia were not yet so fundamentally opposed to those of the Sovereign Prince, Hardenberg was thinking of a scheme by which such acquisitions as might be made by the Sovereign Prince on the right bank of the Maas could form part of the Germanic Confederation and be held by him in the capacity of Prince of the Empire [3]. The Sovereign Prince had no strong conviction on this subject, and a few months later, he caused Castlereagh to be sounded. Castlereagh, to whom no immediate objection occurred, preferred nevertheless to reserve his answer, whereupon the

[1] Sovereign Prince to Clancarty, Oct. 21st 1814, (*Ged.* VII, p. 203).
[2] See above, p. 245 sqq.
[3] Von Humboldt to Sovereign Prince, June 16th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 599–600.)

Prince's plenipotentiaries to the Congress of Vienna were instructed to adopt a non-committal attitude, but to make efforts to ascertain what would be the implications of membership of the Confederation.

Shortly before he went to Vienna, Hardenberg came forward with a more definite proposal, and wrote to Castlereagh that for their own safety the whole of the Netherlands ought to form a "Burgundian Circle" in the Germanic Confederation. The Sovereign Prince would then be one of the directors of the Confederation [1]. As the difficulties with Prussia increased, the Sovereign Prince became more inclined towards the idea of membership. He hoped to ingratiate himself with the Prussians by accepting their plan, and expected that membership of the Confederation would strengthen his influence upon the decision about territorial distribution. But Castlereagh had by this time given thought to the matter. He had discovered a number of reasons against the arrangement which in any case could not possibly have met with his approval. Membership of the Confederation would damage the sovereignty of the Prince, the independence of his states, and perhaps even their trade relations. It would involve the Netherlands in all kinds of complications, and would place their naval resources at the disposal of Germany. Instead therefore, he came back to Hardenberg's original proposal of an intimate and indissoluble defensive alliance with the Germanic Confederation [2]. In November the Sovereign Prince too had come to the conclusion that membership of the Confederation would amount to the sacrifice of Dutch independence. He wrote to Clancarty that he agreed with him on this question, and told him, no doubt with an eye to the effect such a virtuous declaration would make upon his British protectors, that owing to their geographic position, the Netherlands could at the same time consult both their interest

[1] Aug. 27th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 179).

[2] Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Oct. 6th (*Ged.* VII, p. 699); Clancarty to Sovereign Prince, Oct. 7th (*ibid.*, p. 199), and Oct. 10th (*ibid.*, p. 200).

and their inclination. "We are Great Britain's sentry on the Continent, and her great military resources are therefore always at our disposal", reflected the Prince [1]. With a message of fatherly approval on the part of Clancarty, the matter thus came to an end, as far at least as the participation of the whole of the Sovereign Prince's dominions was concerned.

D — *Castlereagh withdraws his Support from Prussia in the Saxon Question: Further Sacrifices at the Expense of the Netherlands required in Consequence*

It was in the course of November 1814 that the momentous change in Castlereagh's attitude towards Prussia took place. Until that time he had supported her claim to Saxony in the hope of effecting co-operation between her and Austria against Russia. When this proved impossible, he did not consider it necessary any longer to resist the cumulative strength of the reasons which pleaded against the annexation of Saxony. The least among them probably was the hesitation of the British Cabinet and the hostility of the Opposition, for Castlereagh was at this period not paying much heed to what was thought in England. Austria had been opposed to the annexation, and so was France, whose king was a relative of the King of Saxony. Confronted with the rising menace from Russia, Castlereagh considered it useful to make a stand which would strengthen the friendly attitude of France towards Great Britain.

By the end of October the Polish question and its implications had brought all other business to a standstill. The Sovereign Prince was assured that his interests were not being neglected, and Clancarty sent him a number of confidential documents in order to keep him acquainted with the general situation and to allay his impatience [2]. The British Government, however, could not be induced

[1] Sovereign Prince to Clancarty, Nov. 11th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 210–1.

[2] Clancarty to Sovereign Prince, Oct. 28th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 207–8).

to look upon Continental affairs with the intense interest that was animating Castlereagh, and continued to attach great importance only to the problems of the Netherlands. They had to be told by Castlereagh on November 21st that it was not prudent to push the interests of the Prince of Orange at this juncture. The only assurance he could give in the meantime was that the idea of giving Bavaria an increase of territory in the Netherlands had been abandoned [1].

The question of the Netherlands, however, had a persistent way of cropping up in the debates. For Prussia, apparently with the support of the Russian Emperor, proposed on December 20th to compensate the King of Saxony with territories on the left bank of the Rhine. This development had been foreseen by the Sovereign Prince a week previously [1]. Castlereagh refused to countenance it, and one of his reasons was that to establish the King of Saxony on the frontier would amount to giving France an open gate to Germany through the territory of a Prince who would necessarily be more friendly to France than to Prussia.

This reference to a danger from France cannot be called insincere, but it referred to a political system which had lost its reality in the mind of Castlereagh. Within a fortnight, the Foreign Secretary was going to enter into an alliance with France. At the moment when this important turning point in foreign relations was being reached in Vienna, the British Cabinet was also endeavouring to find its bearings in view of the changed situation. On December 11th Bathurst, the Secretary for War, drew up a memorandum on foreign policy for his Cabinet colleagues [2]. He pointed out that the alliance was now virtually dissolved, and that Austria stood alone against Prussia. Where, asked Bathurst, would France, who could turn the scales, place herself? If she joined the Northern Allies (Russia and Prussia), she might hope to recover Flanders up to Antwerp, perhaps even to recover

[1] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Nov. 21st (*Ged.* VII, pp. 213–4).
[2] *Bathurst Papers*, pp. 314–6.

the Rhine boundary. Alexander would not object to this, as in his present temper he only wanted to humble Great Britain. France could offer to pay the money which Russia was asking, probably in vain, from Britain, in order to settle her debt in Amsterdam. Prussia could also be bribed and might even give up Saxony in exchange for Hanover. Meanwhile Austria, with her frontiers exposed and threatened, would be unable to send troops to support Great Britain. The Hanoverian troops would of course have to leave Flanders to defend their own country. The rest of Europe would acquiesce, and even Holland would be glad to secure the independence of her old territory by agreement rather than continue a hopeless contest. Against all these inducements for France to join the enemy, Bathurst could think of no other considerations in favour of France's co-operation with Great Britain and Austria than Louis XVIII's gratitude to England, his dislike of Alexander, his wish for the preservation of Saxony, and the national irritation against Prussia, all in the nature of sentiments rather than of interests.

Of the loyalty of the King of France the British Government was becoming less doubtful, but it still felt this loyalty to be a frail foundation upon which to rest a reversal of alliances. The Sovereign Prince had informed the British Government of the alarm felt in the Netherlands as the result of the report that a large military force was being assembled at Lille. He had requested Bathurst to supply artillery and other means of war in order that he might put Ostend, Nieuwpoort, Furnes, and other places into a state of defence against a *coup de main*. On December 23rd Liverpool, notwithstanding the fact that he had just learned that the report as to the Lille *rassemblement* was unfounded, wrote to Castlereagh that measures were being taken to satisfy the request of the Sovereign Prince. "Though we may justly have the fullest reliance on the good faith of the King of France," he wrote, "I am sure you will see that we should not be justified in leaving such essential interests to any

risk" [1]. To the members of the Government in England, France remained the country which had been fought for the last twenty years, and although Castlereagh was on the point of making her Great Britain's ally, they had not yet readjusted their minds to the same extent as had the Foreign Secretary. War against old allies on the side of France appeared to the members of the Cabinet justifiable in one case only. If "the defence of Holland and the Low Countries" required war, they considered themselves justified in embarking upon it, and confident of enlisting the support of Parliament [2].

The swift developments which took place during the last days of December 1814, and which led to the secret treaty of alliance of January 3rd 1815 between Great Britain, Austria, and France, need not be detailed here [2]. We may note that Castlereagh secured the approval of France for the arrangements so far made in favour of the Netherlands by inserting an article (Art. 13) which made the alliance operative in case of an attack upon the Netherlands, in the same way as if a part of the dominions of the British King were attacked, an important point in itself and in its effect on the feelings of the British Government [3]. The Netherlands moreover once more provided an argument in favour of Castlereagh's step; he pointed out to Liverpool that the Prussians seemed to be preparing to impose their views, even by force, on all other points as well as on Saxony, and that in particular the conduct of Prussian agents on the left bank of the Rhine had again been extremely vexatious towards the Dutch Government, while protests were of no avail [4]. It is natural also that the Sovereign Prince should have been invited to join the new alliance, and easy to understand that his obligations towards Great Britain and his

[1] Liverpool to Wellington, Dec. 23rd 1814 (Webster, *Brit. Dipl.* p. 267–8); to Castlereagh, same date (*Ged.* VII, p. 219).
[2] Cf. *Cambridge Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, pp. 479 sqq.
[3] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Jan 1st 1815 (*Br. Dipl.*, p. 279).
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 277. On Jan 2nd Castlereagh again particularly pointed out that the treaty was placing Holland under a friendly protection (*ibid.*, p. 280).

intense distrust of Prussia should have weighed more heavily with him than the friendliness towards Russia which was still in its incipient stage, and than his family ties with the Prussian King. The Dutch participation in the alliance was more than a gesture, and the British extracted from Van Spaen the promise of 50,000 men in case the treaty became operative [1].

Two days after the secret treaty had been signed, Prussia once more made an effort to obtain Castlereagh's agreement to a territorial indemnity for the King of Saxony, in exchange for the whole of his Saxon kingdom. Castlereagh's refusal was as definite as on the previous occasion [2]. But he was already realising that there was no way of preventing the annexation of the whole of Saxony unless compensation was found elsewhere for Prussia. Clancarty, whose task it was to keep contact with the Sovereign Prince and his representatives, began to prepare them for further sacrifices. He made it clear that they could no longer hope that Holland would extend as far as the middle Rhine. But he promised to support as much as possible the view that countries formerly connected under the same government should not be divided [3]. While Castlereagh was engaged upon larger tasks, Clancarty was attending to all the detail of Dutch affairs during the negotiations in January. His plan was to give the Sovereign Prince an increase in population of 450,000 souls on the right bank of the Maas (not taking into account what was Dutch territory already). His frontier would run from Mook along the Maas, allowing for the narrow strip which the Sovereign Prince wished to acquire, to the ancient territory of Valkenberg; it would envelop almost the whole *département de l'Ourthe*,

[1] Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Feb. 3rd 1815 (*Ged.* VII, p. 728). The Dutch signature to the treaty was given on Feb. 3rd, although for technical reasons it was dated Jan. 31st (*ibid.*, note).
[2] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Jan 5th and Jan 8th 1815 (*Br. Dipl.*, pp. 282–5).
[3] Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Jan 2nd and 4th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 717–20); Clancarty to Sovereign Prince, Jan 4th and 6th (*ibid.*, pp. 720–3); Clancarty to Van Nagell, Jan 6th (*ibid.*, p. 220).

that of *Sambre et Meuse*, and almost all the *département des Forêts*, including Luxemburg, which, however, would become a fortress of the Germanic Confederation under the Sovereignty of the Prince. Castlereagh asked that, in order to assist the realisation of this plan, the Sovereign Prince should sacrifice his hereditary Nassau lands. As regards his position and influence in the Confederation, these would be secured by making him Duke of Luxemburg. In order further to facilitate negotiations the Sovereign Prince was also invited to agree to new concessions in regard to the Russian debt agreement.

Clancarty had asked the Sovereign Prince to send to Vienna full powers for the decision of the various new points that had arisen, and these were brought by Van der Capellen, the former Dutch Commissioner in Belgium, whom the Prince had sent in the hope that he might open further negotiations. The arrival of Van der Capellen, who knew nothing of the atmosphere in Vienna and wanted to start negotiating afresh from the beginning, was not very welcome to his colleagues. He himself realised that his visit could serve no good purpose [1]. The admitted necessity of compensating Prussia with an increase equivalent to that she had hoped to find in Saxony dominated the situation. Castlereagh was compelled to make a still further concession to the Prussians. The principle that only a part of Saxony was to be annexed had been granted, and Prussia's determination to keep Leipzig at last gave way before Russia's offer of the Polish fortress of Thorn. But even then Prussia was so immoderate in her claims that Castlereagh was compelled to offer a further 50,000 souls at the expense of Hanover, and a similar increase to be obtained from the territories hitherto destined for the Sovereign Prince [2]. The first concession was only made after a preliminary conference with Munster, the Hanoverian representative, but the Dutch delegates

[1] Sovereign Prince to Clancarty, Jan. 17th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 726–7). Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Feb. 2nd 1815 (*ibid.*, p. 729); Van der Capellen to Sovereign Prince, same date (*ibid.*).

[2] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Feb. 6th 1815 (*Br. Dipl.*, pp. 299–302).

were not similary consulted. "The English rather order us about", complained Van Spaen. "Everything proceeded more or less as if we were not there", was Van der Capellen's comment on the situation. "We have had no part whatever in this affair", he remarked, on hearing the details of the settlement [1].

The interests of the Netherlands were defended exclusively by Clancarty, who undertook the task of meeting two Prussian Commissioners in order to fix the boundaries which would give to Prussia her increased number of inhabitants. Much haggling took place at these meetings, and Clancarty valiantly defended the interests of the Sovereign Prince. "It is almost impossible to do full justice to Lord Clancarty's indefatigable labour and zeal", wrote Van Spaen to Van Nagell [2]. "He has not been able to do all he would have liked, and I believe that he has often been directed by Lord Castlereagh to soothe us about things which pleased him as little as they did us. The chief delegate has interested himself in us as a statesman, but the former Ambassador as a man, as genuinely devoted to the Sovereign Prince as to the whole Dutch nation".

At their meetings on February 12th and 13th, the plenipotentiaries of the Powers accepted the definite settlement worked out by Clancarty, which was eventually incorporated on the final act of the Congress of Vienna. The eastern frontier of the Netherlands now coincided with what is still the eastern frontier of Holland and what was the eastern frontier of Belgium until the Treaty of Versailles (1919), minus the present Belgian province of Luxemburg[3]. The Sovereign Prince was also given, in exchange for his Nassau lands, a large part of the Duchy of

[1] Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Feb. 3rd (*Ged.* VII, pp. 728–9); Van der Capellen to Van Nagell, Feb. 3rd (*ibid.*, p. 731) and Feb. 12th (*ibid.*, pp. 733–4).

[2] Feb. 12th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 733–4). Clancarty's detailed report of these negotiations to the Sovereign Prince, Feb. 14th (*ibid.*, pp. 736–40).

[3] The precise frontier, Lagemans, *Traités*, I., p. 79; Hertslett *Map of Europe*, I, pp. 248 sqq.

Luxemburg, which was to form part of the Germanic confederation [1]. While these arrangements were being concluded, the Sovereign Prince continued to address to the British delegates complaints and requests which of course could no longer influence the issue [2]. Castlereagh, in a latter to Liverpool, expressed particular satisfaction because Hanover was now to be contiguous to the Netherlands [3]. But he was already occupied with bigger problems, and especially that of a plan of guarantee for the peace of Europe. The question of the watch along the frontier of France had receded into a very subsidiary position. Very soon Napoleon's return from Elba gave a renewed actuality to the problem of the shores of the North Sea.

E. — *The Port of Antwerp — The Settlement of the Russian Debt*

About the middle of February Castlereagh left Vienna and returned to London, where the Government most urgently required his assistance in order to satisfy the desire of the House of Commons for information about the Peace terms. It is not necessary to enter into the details of debates in the British Parliament. The Opposition took little interest in the Belgian question. This is all the more striking, as protests were raised in the name of the rights of nationality against the annexation of

[1] It was also owing to Clancarty's intervention that, although the town of Luxemburg was made a fortress of the Germanic Confederation, the right to appoint the military governor and the military commandant was given to the Sovereign Prince (Clancarty to Van Nagell, March 9th 1815, *Ged.* VII, p. 226). The fact that Luxemburg became part of the Germanic Confederation cannot be considered exclusively as a concession to Prussia. It meant that in the case of an attack against Luxemburg, the Sovereign Prince would be able to call upon all the military forces of the Confederation to assist him. The Allies agreed that Luxemburg should be a Grand Duchy in order to give the Sovereign Prince a higher status in the Germanic Confederation (Clancarty to Castlereagh, March 18th, *ibid.*, p. 233).

[2] Stuart to Castlereagh, Feb. 24th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, p. 223); Van Nagell to Clancarty, Feb. 26th (*ibid.*, pp. 224–5).

[3] Feb. 13th (*Br. Dipl.*, p. 303).

Norway to Sweden and against that of Genoa to Piedmont. In his speech of April 27th Mackintosh even declared that he had nothing to say against the incorporation of Belgium with Holland. Mackintosh was a historian and may have judged that the establishment of a United Netherlands was no innovation. On June 9th, in the House of Lords, Lord Grey criticised the Netherlands arrangement from the point view of expediency. He would have preferred to give Belgium to some third power capable of defending it.

During Castlereagh's absence in England, Clancarty continued his task at Vienna with the assistance of Wellington, who had become the second British plenipotentiary. The main questions had been solved before Castlereagh's departure. Among the lesser matters that were left to be settled was Antwerp. For Antwerp as a military port, which before Castlereagh's first Continental journey seemed to be the point on which the whole arrangement in the Netherlands turned, had greatly lost in importance since the frontier of the Netherlands had been moved much further south than had been the original intention. In October, when he had visited the town, Castlereagh had already doubted the wisdom of a complete demolition of all its naval works. Later, in Vienna, when the Powers appointed a commission to study the free navigation of international rivers (December 1814), the freedom of the Scheldt and the disarmament of Antwerp had to be included in the programme, according to the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris. On February 2nd Van Spaen was invited to join the commission, together with the representatives of the German states directly concerned. Castlereagh kept entirely aloof from these debates, while Prussia and the other German states displayed no interest in the regulations about the Scheldt. Before Antwerp was discussed, Clancarty came to the conclusion that the matter was extremely complicated. Many of the naval works of the town were suitable for purely mercantile use. Nobody on the commission had any interest in the disarmament of Antwerp, and

Clanarty saw that the commission was not the right body to do justice to the wishes of Britain [1]. At the meeting of March 22nd, Clancarty therefore proposed that Great Britain and the Netherlands should each appoint a commissioner whose task it would be to decide which works were to be preserved, and which were to be modified or transformed. This proposal was accepted, and it was decided that the Sovereign Prince must ensure the execution of the recommendations [2].

Thus Great Britain obtained a most attractive solution in many respects. That Antwerp was only to be a commercial port remained a treaty stipulation which could always be invoked if circumstances on the Continent, or the present friendly relations with the Netherlands were to change. But the return of Napoleon and the events which were taking place while the March sessions of the River Commission were being held were proving how much England's security against attack from Antwerp lay in the strength of the southern defence of the Netherlands. Whatever might, in the light of new experiences, appear to be the requisite manner of dealing with the basin of Antwerp would have to be carried out, in virtue of the decision of the Powers gathered in Vienna, by a commission which was entirely under British influence.

Before we pass to the events of the Hundred Days, which provided an opportunity for testing the efficiency of the barrier that had just been erected, we must deal with the financial arrangements in favour of Austria, Prussia, and Russia which were being completed in accordance with the London Protocol of July 21st. 1814. When Castlereagh and Clancarty finally settled the division of the territories beyond the Maas between Prussia and Holland, they agreed that the Netherlands should take over from Austria her Belgic debt, or that they should provide her with the means for the interest and sinking fund of that debt; while Prussia, who claimed arrears of

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, March 11th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, p. 227).
[2] *Procès Verbal* of the eleventh meeting of the Commission on Rivers. (*D'Angeberg*, II, pp. 949–50). Twelfth meeting (*ibid.*, pp. 955–6).

war contribution in Belgium, was induced to relinquish her demands by a further payment of British war subsidies to which, according to Castlereagh, she was not legally entitled [1]. The arrangements with Russia were of a more complicated nature and must be described in greater detail.

When Castlereagh addressed his circular note from Troyes to the Allied Ministers, asking for a territorial increase for Holland (February 15th 1814), the Russians made the proposal that in exchange for their consent Great Britain and Holland should take upon themselves a debt of eighty million Dutch guilders which Russia owed to Dutch bankers [2], not by making a capital payment, but by becoming responsible for the interest and a moderate sinking fund. This request had already been made at an earlier period of the war. It was then refused, and Castlereagh now felt as little inclined to agree as before. He did not expect that Parliament would listen to such a proposal. Clancarty thought this an "extraordinary and most unreasonable demand", an exorbitant price to pay for the extension of territory [3]. But the Russians insisted. The extension of Holland, wrote Nesselrode to Castlereagh [4], was a direct advantage to Great Britain, who would henceforth be perfectly safe against France. Russia had made immense sacrifices to obtain this advantage, and to further the cause of European safety. The exodus of money and the depreciation of the paper rouble threatened the resources of the Russian state and of its subjects. The latter contention certainly was not unfounded. At that very moment, Lord Walpole, the British Acting Ambassador at Petersburg, was writing to the Foreign Office that the Russians were compelled to issue clandestinely enormous quantities of paper money [5]. In reply to

[1] Van Spaen to Van Nagell, Feb. 12th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 733–4); Clancarty to Sovereign Prince, Feb. 14th 1815 (*ibid.*, pp. 738–9).
[2] Roughly 6 million sterling (Castlereagh to Clancarty, Feb. 20th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 62) to Liverpool, March 8th (*ibid.*, pp. 85–7).
[3] Clancarty to Castlereagh, March 1st 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 70).
[4] March 6th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 79–80).
[5] March 8th 1814 (*F. O. Russia* 94).

Nesselrode, Castlereagh suggested that an agreement might be reached if Russia, Holland, and Great Britain took upon themselves equal shares of the debt. It was arranged that further negotiations should take place upon this basis. For the time being the matter remained in abeyance and was kept secret from the Sovereign Prince [1].

During the negotiations for the first Peace of Paris, the Russians again introduced the question of the debt. In the course of his visit to Paris at the end of May 1814, the Sovereign Prince gathered some information about the affair from Nesselrode, whereupon Castlereagh admitted that negotiations had been taking place [2]. The Prince's opinion was that the Russian wishes would have to be met at least in part; and the British Government agreed, however unreasonable it held the Russian contention to be. During the visit of the Allied Sovereigns and Ministers to London, the Russian debt was again mentioned. Castlereagh, who wished to secure some definite advantages in return for any concession he might make, referred to the difficulty his Government would have in persuading Parliament to sanction the necessary expenditure. If Castlereagh's hands were often tied by the necessity of humouring Parliament, he more than once used his Parliament with much success as an argument in negotiating with Foreign Powers. In this case his motives probably were mixed, and it is certain that he felt no regret when pointing out that Parliamentary sanction could only be obtained if a promise of a durable European settlement and of improved trade relations with Russia could be held out [3]. Negotiations were, in consequence, deferred till the time of the general congress. Meanwhile, the Russians had to remain satisfied with the general declaration at the end of the Protocol of June 21st. The Dutch and the British agreed among themselves to share the charges that would result from the Russian

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Mar. 22nd 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 90).

[2] The matter is somewhat obscure. Cf. Colenbrander, *Vestiging*, p. 188, especially note 1, and the documents in the *Gedenkstukken* quoted there.

[3] Castlereagh to Nesselrode, July 11th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 159–60).

debt settlement, and mention was made of this understanding in the treaty dealing with the colonies signed in London on August 13th [1]. The Sovereign Prince, who had also attempted to obtain counter-concessions in the shape of an increase of his share of territory beyond the Maas, had equally to wait for the decision of the Congress of Vienna [2].

When the plenipotentiaries met, the territorial problems were almost exclusively in the limelight. The British Ministers, who remained rather indifferent towards them, and who were moreover continually harassed by Parliament, tried to shake off some of the financial liabilities incurred by Castlereagh. In November 1814 Liverpool wrote to the Foreign Secretary that in view of the absence of all prospects of an early cessation of the American war, and of the further high expenditure this would cause to the Exchequer, everything possible must be done to avoid undertaking any burden arising out of Russia's debt [3]. But when, in the first days of January, the situation in Vienna became critical, the British representatives hastily collected every possible bait with which they could tempt the Russians and the Prussians to moderate their ambitions. They decided again to offer that Holland and Great Britain should each take upon themselves one third of the debt. Although Van Spaen and the Dutch Government were informed of this step, Castlereagh and Clancarty proceeded without waiting for their consent [4]. The Dutch eventually suggested that Russia should remain responsible for 50 per cent of the debt, and Great Britain and Holland each for 25 per cent. This new partition, which was justified by the fact that the Dutch extension of territory was less than originally expected, naturally also appeared more attractive to the British. Castlereagh framed a proposal upon that basis, and made it a condition that the service of the debt should

[1] First additional article, 3°, Lagemans, *Traités*, I, p. 39.

[2] Van Nagell to H. Fagel, June 17th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 602).

[3] Nov. 2nd 1814 (*Br. Dipl.*, p. 221).

[4] Clancarty to Sovereign Prince, Jan 6th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, p. 722).

depend upon the continued possession of the Southern Netherlands by the Sovereign Prince and his family. In this way he made Russia financially interested in the State of the United Netherlands, and secured "the most effectual guarantee upon the part of Russia that could be devised".

When the news arrived of Napoleon's landing, Castlereagh's mind was naturally carried back to the early day of 1814, when he left for his first Continental journey with the primary object of consolidating the alliance against France. The estrangement of Russia had to cease at almost any cost, and Castlereagh instructed Clancarty to give the Russian Emperor a written assurance that the half of the loan would be defrayed by Great Britain and Holland jointly. This assurance however was to be given only after the Powers had been prevailed upon to sign a treaty making definite all the arrangements upon which they had agreed. The Russian Ministers were informed of this decision on March 23rd. Upon Castlereagh's suggestion it was decided that negotiations regarding the interest, the sinking fund, and all other details should take place in London in consultation with the British Treasury [1].

The technical negotiations started in London on April 30th. The Russian Ambassador Lieven met Fagel at Castlereagh's house, and read a memorandum expatiating upon Russia's claims to the gratitude of mankind, especially that of Great Britain, to whom she had given her "preponderant support" in all questions more immediately linked up with direct British interest. This, Lieven urged, was particularly the case "in the question of the union of Belgium and Holland, which has established in the North a political and military system eminently useful for the maintenance of the general equilibrium [2]". It was in consequence of these services that Great Britain and the Netherlands were now asked to compensate the subjects of the Russian Emperor. The Anglo-Dutch share of the

[1] Castlereagh to Wellington, Mar. 12th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, p. 227); Wellington to Castlereagh, Mar. 25th (*ibid.*, p. 234).

[2] *F. O. Russia*, 100.

liability was fixed at 50 out of the 80 million guilders. The convention was signed on May 19th, and the fifth article stipulated that if the possession of the Belgic Provinces by the King of the Netherlands should terminate before the complete liquidation of the debt, the payments would cease [1].

F. — *The Defence of the Netherlands: Conflicting Views of Great Britain and Russia*

If British diplomacy had obtained an increase of Dutch territory in order to place at the disposal of the Sovereign Prince a larger reservoir for recruiting and for raising taxation, it also aimed at placing a barrier of a nature more concrete than political allegiance between the French and the shores of the Low Countries, including the port of Antwerp. This appears very clearly from the terms of Castlereagh's memorandum of the Cabinet meeting of December 26th 1813 [2], where among the "objects *sine qua non*" required by Great Britain is mentioned "a barrier which shall at least include Juliers and Antwerp as well as Maestricht." It was further stated that in consideration of her acquisition of the Cape of Good Hope, Great Britain would appropriate two millions sterling "to be applied towards the improvement of the Dutch barrier." This transaction is usually represented as being a sale, but no name suits it less. Great Britain held the Cape by right of conquest, and never for one moment thought of giving it up. Castlereagh merely joined the two transactions because he thought that Parliament would be readier to consent to a payment of two million pounds towards the fortification of the Netherlands if this were represented as the price of the acquisition of the Cape. Holland was left no freedom of choice, hence there never was a sale. Moreover, the "seller" had no free disposal of

[1] Lagemans, *Traités*, pp. 72–77. It may be noted that in this document the King of the Netherlands is repeatedly called "His Belgic Majesty" ("Sa Majesté Belge"), an interesting instance of a late use of the word in the sense attached to it in Renaissance Latin.

[2] Above, p. 210.

the "purchase money," for in the Convention of August 13th 1814, dealing with the disposal of the former Dutch colonies, the stipulation by which Great Britain undertook to pay two million sterling was qualified by the obligation of the Sovereign Prince to pay a similar amount and by the statement that the British payment would be applied "in concert with the Prince Sovereign" towards augmenting and improving the defences of the Low Countries (i.e. the Southern Netherlands) [1]. Great Britain was thus placed in the privileged position; her particular interest in the barrier and her right to interfere in the details of the frontier fortification were recognised.

An interesting situation arose as a result of Russia's determination to oppose the influence which Great Britain was acquiring in Holland. The affair of the royal marriage plan, and the partial emancipation of Holland from British diplomatic patronage in the middle of 1814, which became more marked, as we shall see, late in 1815, were other manifestations of the same struggle. For some time the progress of Russia's policy was handicapped by her financial greed. But the tendency was noticeable, and nowhere clearer than in the subterranean struggle in regard to the organisation of the defence of the Netherlands. The British party was led by the Hereditary Prince of Orange, who was connected by ties of friendship and gratitude with the two personages who directed British strategy, Bathurst and Wellington. The Sovereign Prince on the other hand was influenced by von Phull, a Prussian, risen to the rank of General in the Russian service, whom he had known in London in 1813 and who, upon the Prince's invitation, had accompanied him to The Hague. He was appointed Minister of Russia at The Hague in January 1814.

The opposition between the British and the Russian views as to the defence of the Netherlands was more fundamental than if it had merely resulted from a desire on the part of the Russians to undermine the Anglo-Dutch understanding. In the eyes of the British Government,

[1] Lagemans, *Traités*, I, p. 39.

for which nationality mattered little, possession was the most valuable title to territorial ownership. Hence the idea that Belgium had to be dotted over with fortresses where the Dutch troops would hold out, in the event of a French invasion, until assistance from England and from Germany arrived. This was really a return to the strategy of the eighteenth century. The Russians, on the other hand, had withstood an invasion into the heart of their country because for them, supported as they were by national consciousness, there could be no doubt as to allegiance and ownership. Vast tracts of territory might be surrendered and retreat become a strategy: the main problem for them was not to maintain a hold on the land, but to save the national forces from being annihilated by the invaders. It is a highly interesting fact that von Phull, the Sovereign Prince's unofficial military adviser, was the man who, according to the Emperor Alexander, had conceived the plan of the campaign of 1812, which saved Russia from Napoleon [1]. "The large number of fortresses with which Holland is over-burdened," wrote von Phull as soon as he arrived in Holland in December 1813, "far from assisting her defence, would only embarrass it [2]". In September 1814, von Phull was at Brussels, endeavouring to persuade the Sovereign Prince that the fortresses which England wanted to construct upon the Belgian frontier were "harmful rather than useful," and that the Maas was the main line of operation for the Dutch army, with the result that the most essential support would have to reach him from the North of Germany which was strongly influenced by the Russian Emperor.

[1] Sorel, VII, pp. 527 and note. Von Phull had entered the service of Russia in 1806. Alexander's assertion may not be strictly true to facts, but it is certain that von Phull had been closely connected with the conduct of the war of 1812.

[2] Von Phull's memoir for the Sovereign Prince (Falck, *Gedenkschriften*, Appendix, p. 342). Wintzigerode, who commanded the Russian troops that were invading Holland in 1813, was equally sceptical about the value of fortresses. "It is by pushing forward that you will make fortresses fall", he said to the Dutch delegate who visited him in January 1814 (Bangeman Huygens to Van Hogendorp, Jan 30th 1814, *Ged.* VII, p. 476).

It is remarkable that von Phull, in writing to the Emperor, admitted that he held this language "in order to reduce the British alliance to its right value in his (the Sovereign Prince's) mind" [1]. Von Phull drew up a plan in accordance with these principles, and presented it to the Sovereign Prince about the end of the year. His advice was to leave the frontier between the sea and the Maas entirely open, to restore the defences of Liège, Namur, and Maastricht, and, in case of an offensive by the French, to retire along these places upon Nimwegen, leaving the whole of Belgium to the French, and defending only Holland from behind the rivers [2].

The British system of defence of the Netherlands was diametrically opposed to von Phull's visions of sweeping strategic movements. "The English," wrote von Phull to Alexander in the letter which has already been quoted, "limit their military views to maintaining the directest possible military communication and, unwilling to sacrifice momentary advantage to the large results of well combined operations, they will push themselves, as they are already beginning to do, into the territory between the Lys and the sea, and in their weakness they will draw to themselves the Hanoverians .... and the Prussians. From this disposition will result a pernicious weakness upon the left flank, which will give the French army much facility for turning the English army and throwing it upon the coast." As the Hereditary Prince saw it, the British plan consisted in narrowing as much as feasible the front towards France by making part of it so strong that it could not be attacked directly. This was to be effected on the right flank by strengthening Nieuwpoort, Ypres, Tournay, etc., by re-building some other fortifications, and by connecting them up by means of extensive inundations [3].

Before this plan had been formulated, in the month of

[1] Von Phull to Alexander, Oct. 1st 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. XXXIV—VI).
[2] Hereditary Prince to Bathurst, Jan 6th 1815 (*Bathurst Papers*, pp. 320–1).
[3] Hereditary Prince to Bathurst, Jan. 24th 1815 (*ibid.*, p. 328).

August 1814, Wellington made an extensive tour of inspection along the military works and fortifications in Belgium. He was accompanied by the Hereditary Prince, who had left The Hague on July 21st in order to take up his post as commander of the combined British and Dutch forces in Belgium. Wellington's advice, which the Hereditary Prince looked upon as invaluable even before it had been given, was not very favourable. He found much to be criticised in the existing arrangements, and wrote a report on his observations, copies of which were sent to the British Government and to the Sovereign Prince [1]. The Russians were not the only critics of the British plans. Van Hogendorp considered, at any rate in later years when he wrote his memoirs, that the plan aimed mainly at confirming the dependence of the Dutch upon Great Britain. By multiplying the number of fortified places which would have to be garrisoned by Dutch troops, the British were depriving the Dutch of the possibility of having an army of their own in the field, with the consequence that they would have to rely upon the British to provide them with one [2].

The Hereditary Prince informed Bathurst of the existence of von Phull's plans, which he considered "extraordinary and ill-conceived," but which, he feared, had much weight with his father [3]. In England, this new instance of Russian antagonism was not looked upon without apprehension. "It should be intimated to the Sovereign Prince that he ought not to be over ready to listen to the opinions of Phull, and above all not to be disposed to set them in opposition to those of the Duke of Wellington," wrote Liverpool to Barthurst [4]. Liverpool realised that to adopt the Russian system would be equivalent to admitting that Belgium would be left undefended, with the consequent risk of throwing the population into the

[1] *Ged.* VII, pp. 157, 178, 559, 647–8; *Bathurst Papers*, pp. 282–3; Liverpool to Bathurst, Oct. 9th (*ibid.*, p. 298); Hudson Lowe to Major Gen, Bunbury, Oct. 10th, 1814 (*ibid.*).
[2] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* V, p. 160.
[3] Jan 6th (*Bathurst Papers*, pp. 320–1).
[4] Jan. 13th 1815 (*ibid.*, p. 322).

arms of the French. It was decided to appoint a commission of engineers who would immediately leave England to make arrangements for the barrier fortresses. When the Sovereign Prince heard of this, he was annoyed because he thought the measure premature [1].

Napoleon's return put an end to these debates. Immediate action took the place of strategic speculations about distant eventualities, and practice proved very considerably different from all the hypotheses that had been envisaged, for the simple reason that nothing was ready for so prompt a return of France to her part of disturber of the peace. Wellington was appointed to command the British armies in the Netherlands, which implied the resignation of the Hereditary Prince from his position of Commander of the Anglo-Dutch forces. It was not long before Wellington had the whole situation in hand, although this did not take place without a struggle with the Sovereign of the Netherlands. In March 16th 1815 the Sovereign Prince, in order to make clear to the Belgians that their fate had been definitely settled, proclaimed himself King of the Netherlands. King William of the Netherlands did not at once realise to what extent he would have to defer to the Commander-in-Chief of the troops of his British ally. He began, immediately the news of Napoleon's landing arrived, to prepare plans for the defence of his country. Von Phull took part in preparing these plans. He proposed that a line from Antwerp to Breda and Venloo should be occupied, whereupon the whole combined English, Prussian, and Dutch armies would move along the Maas to Luxemburg. This would leave Brabant and Flanders open to the French. Stuart, the British representative in the Netherlands during Clancarty's absence in Vienna, prevailed upon Falck to throw this plan into the fire [2].

In the meantime the British engineers had arrived and had been ordered to start work on the fortresses between

[1] Sovereign Prince to Falck, Feb. 19th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 741–2).
[2] Stuart to Castlereagh, Mar. 17th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 741–2); to Bathurst, Mar. 24th (*Bathurst Papers*, p. 343). Stuart was assured by Van Nagell that the Dutch plan did not contain a single measure founded upon von Phull's principles. (To Bathurst, Mar. 17th, *ibid.*, p. 341).

the Scheldt and the sea. Nevertheless, when Wellington took over the command from the Hereditary Prince (he arrived in Brussels on the night of April 3rd to 4th) he soon found that the Dutch King's behaviour was still strongly influenced by the advice that had been given by von Phull, and that he was reluctant to detach troops for the defence of the southern fortresses, while concentrating his forces towards the Maas, with a view to garrisoning Maastricht, Venloo, and Grave in case of a forced retreat of the Allied armies. The correspondence which ensued and which was conducted entirely with the Hereditary Prince as intermediary, led to King William's abandoning his views in order not to hamper the complete freedom of action of the Commander-in-Chief [1]. Other difficulties followed. Wellington distrusted, not without reason, the officers of Belgian birth who were in command of the fortresses in the south, because they had served under Napoleon. The Dutch King, on the other hand, faithful to his principle of appointing men on account only of their ability, and not of their political antecedents, refused to remove them. Wellington complained that he had the greatest difficulty in making any arrangements with the King, who objected to everything proposed. "I have every reason to be dissatisfied with the King, and with my situation here," he wrote to Bathurst on May 4th [2]. Castlereagh and Bathurst fully supported Wellington in his difficulties with the King, and went even farther than he by requiring that Wellington should keep the fullest control over Antwerp and Ostend, no doubt in order to assure himself of a safe retreat [3]. But on May 4th the King put an end to the friction by appointing Wellington to the command of the new Dutch Belgian armies. From that moment, complaints ceased. On June 18th the battle of

[1] Wellington to Hereditary Prince, Apr. 17th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 762–3). Draft of letters to Hereditary Prince by the King and by Falck, and the King's letter to the Prince, Apr. 20th (*ibid.*, pp. 763–6).
[2] *Ged.* VII, pp. 239–42.
[3] Bathurst to Wellington, May 2nd 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 240–1); H. Fagel to Van Nagell, reporting a conversation with Castlereagh, May 9th (*ibid.*, p. 772).

Waterloo was fought, and the Napoleonic threat was definitely eliminated. But its temporary recrudescence had made its mark upon the last phase of the international negotiations.

G. — *Territorial Readjustments as a Result of the Hundred Days*

By assuming the royal title on March 16th 1815, as a result of Napoleon's return, the Sovereign Prince did no more than advance the date of an event which would have taken place sooner or later in any case. The Powers had at no time since the liberation of Holland objected to the change of title. That the Prince had postponed it till the final reunion of Holland and Belgium was due to his conviction that Holland by itself was too small a country to become a kingdom, and also to his hope of being invited by the Powers to assume the royal dignity, because there lingered in him a disinclination to do this on his own authority. His plenipotentiaries to the Vienna Congress had been instructed to take a passive attitude in any discussion about this matter, but to give their consent if the title were offered [1]. On March 8th Clancarty had written to the Sovereign Prince that upon a proposal by Wellington the Powers had decided to put an end to the existing provisional state of affairs, and that this meant they were all in full agreement about the expediency of the Prince's assuming the royal title [2]. The British, Prussian, and Russian representatives at The Hague, the last, however, subject to his master's approval, gave their full support to the Prince when he decided to take the step [3]. On March 23rd Wellington informed his colleagues in Vienna of the event, and obtained the approval of Russia [4].

The new threat from the French side brought no abatement of the difficulties with Prussia. In March, the

[1] *Ged.* VII, pp. 148, 653 sqq., 715, 742–3.
[2] *Ged.* VII, pp. 744–6.
[3] Brockhausen to Frederick William, Mar, 16th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 313–4).
[4] Wellington to Castlereagh, Mar 25th (*Ged.* VII, p. 234).

Prussians intimated their decision not to evacuate Liège and the districts beyond the Maas before the arrangements as to Saxony and Poland had been executed. In April, von Kleist tried to incorporate all men of military age at Liège into his army, while von Sack was including the old Dutch communes on the right bank of the Maas in his war levy. The Prussians were ill-treating the inhabitants of the Southern Netherlands, compelling them to wear Prussian cockades, and, by their ruthless behaviour, causing many people to emigrate to France [1]. For the sake of harmonious co-operation, the King of the Netherlands tried to obtain the aid of the British in order to compel Prussia to hand over to him that part of his kingdom which she still occupied [2]. Although they did not wish to be disagreeable to the Prussians, whose geographical position made them particularly necessary for the defence of the Low Countries, the British supported this request, and, at the beginning of May, the Dutch King was put in possession of the civil government of the whole of his territories [3], while a month later Clancarty took steps to obtain from Prussia compensation for the exactions of her troops in Belgium. He did not expect great results from his *démarche*. But after the military decision, alarmed by the coolness which existed between Prussia and the Netherlands, he and Castlereagh did their best to mediate between the two countries. Castlereagh, who had returned to the Continent at the beginning of July, approached Hardenberg while Clancarty discussed the matter with Humboldt. Both Prussian statesmen admitted that at times they were unable to control their military leaders. They seemed, nevertheless, prepared to evacuate the enclaves which they still occupied and which, according to the frontier agreement of Vienna, were to go to the Netherlands; but Clancarty deemed it advisable to counsel a considerable reduction of the price asked for the subsistence

[1] *Ged.* VII, pp. 313, 760, 344–5.
[2] Van Nagell to Clancarty, Apr. 22nd (*Ged.* VII, p. 238).
[3] Clancarty to Van Nagell, July 2nd 1815, replying to a letter from Van Nagell, not preserved, of May 3rd.

levied by the Prussian troops during their occupation [1].

The British attempt at conciliation was more than superfluous, for entirely of their own accord the Netherlands were moving towards new friendships much closer than Great Britain could have wished. The proposal of a marriage between the Hereditary Prince (who since his father's assumption of the royal dignity had become the Prince of Orange) with Anna Pavlovna, sister of the Emperor Alexander, had been made in June. From that time the Dutch King's friendliness towards Russia had increased very fast. James, the British Chargé d'Affaires in the Netherlands, noticed signs of the Russophile tendency at the Dutch Court, and rightly explained them by the fact that it was hoped thus to obtain the goodwill of Prussia, who was considered to be "committed to the politics of the former power" [2]. Binder, the Austrian Minister at The Hague, was also aware of the new orientation. He reported to Metternich that the alliance of Prussia, the most powerful among the Continental neighbours of the Netherlands, was now being sought, and that this was being done through Russia, who was being cajoled in consequence. The aim was, he thought, a greater *rapprochement* between the northern powers [3]. The immediate reason, however, of the Dutch King's overtures to Russia was that he had been unsuccessful in converting the British to his scheme of far-reaching annexations at the expense of France. He definitely applied to Russia, in consequence, in a letter addressed to the Emperor himself [4], but his attempt was in vain for, strong though the undertone of economic and political rivalry between Russia and Great Britain remained, in the matter of the treatment of France after the second restoration of the Bourbons, Alexander

[1] Clancarty to Van Nagell, June 2nd and July 29th 1815 (*Ged.* VII pp. 244, 249–51).
[2] James to Castlereagh, Aug. 11th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, p. 257).
[3] Aug. 16th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 349–50).
[4] Aug. 28th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 794–5). Van Nagell was even more strongly in favour of co-operation with Russia (Clancarty to Castlereagh, Sept. 25th, *Ged.* VII, p. 279).

and Castlereagh, who finally carried his own government with him, happened to be in full agreement.

On May 31st 1915 the treaties between the Netherlands and Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia, fixing the Netherlands frontier according to the agreement reached at the Congress in February, had been signed. They were incorporated in the general act of the Congress of June 9th. But from all sides voices arose asking for a revision of the frontier that had been settled by the first Peace of Paris. In July, Liverpool wanted to take back from France the principal conquests of Louis XIV [1]. On the other hand, Castlereagh, Clancarty, and Wellington considered that a demand for permanent cessions to any available extent was incompatible with the re-establishment of the authority of King Louis XVIII, which formed in itself the most essential security. But when they advanced these views, they found against them, apart from the British Cabinet, Austria, Prussia, and the Netherlands, who, with one voice, were asking for the cession of certain points which France might use for a new offensive. The demands of Austria and Prussia are interesting from our point of view because, in order that Prussia should be put farther forward in contact with France, these two Powers asked that she should be given Luxemburg as well as some French fortresses. The Netherlands were to be compensated for the loss of Luxemburg by the cession of other French fortresses to the west of it [2].

The Dutch King, on his side, came forward with his own desiderata, which were transmitted, according to the tradition of the last eighteen months, to the British diplomats. He did not, however, present them with one single set of definite requests. On July 17th, his Foreign Minister Van Nagell asked Clancarty's support for the rectification of the boundary between France and Belgium, which, he said, was a matter of urgency. He wished to obtain some of the fortresses called *ligne de Vauban*,

[1] *Camb. Hist., Br. For. Pol.*, I, pp. 508–9.
[2] Clancarty's summary of the situation to Castlereagh, Aug. 30th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, p. 267).

while such of them as the Netherlands did not acquire were to be destroyed [1]. Two days later, the King wrote to Wellington, but modestly limited himself to asking the General's advice as to whether he should seek to obtain the provisional possession of these fortresses, until an iron fence had been constructed in the Netherlands. He pointed out that by taking from France, her ancient enemy, the means by which to assure the existence of her natural ally, Great Britain could save the two millions which she had earmarked for the construction of fortifications in the Netherlands [2]. And a month later Van Hogendorp, with the knowledge and approval of the King, wrote to Castlereagh, reminding him of the conversation they had had in January 1814, and of the request he then made that Dunkirk should be handed to the Dutch. The former Dutch Foreign Secretary now declared that events had proved how necessary this annexation had become in order to secure British communications with the Netherlands, and requested Castlereagh to re-consider his former refusal [3]. Although asking for cessions from France, King William was not prepared to give up Luxemburg. He had by this time given a constitution to the whole of his Kingdom, which applied to Luxemburg in the same way as to his other territories, and by which he considered himself precluded from ceding the Grand Duchy. (This was not a strong argument, for the new constitution of the Netherlands provided for the procedure to be followed in the case of alterations of the national territory.) Moreover he did not wish to be cut off by Prussia from all access to Southern Germany, a potential recruiting ground for his armies.

Clancarty pointed out to Van Nagell that the question was not how much the Allies could extort from France, but what could with justice be demanded as necessary to the safety of Europe. This he gave as being merely his personal view. Wellington's reply to the King took a more

[1] *Ged.* VII, pp. 781–2.
[2] July 19th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 781–2).
[3] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* VI, p. 297.

official character, and was written after consultation with Castlereagh. The Allies, he said, were only disposed to consider an arrangement which would restore the situation of 1790. The intention at present was to leave for a limited time an Allied army of occupation in France in order to prevent political trouble, and to occupy for a number of years some frontier fortresses, the expenditure being provided by a contribution made by the French [1]. Castlereagh himself was not less positive in his refusal to countenance the Dutch demands. To von Gagern, who pleaded with him for the plan of the Dutch King, he replied that to cut into the French nation would only irritate it. The cession of a few strong places, said Castlereagh, was a pitiable measure which guaranteed nothing, because it gave no extra strength, and its results could be equally obtained by getting from France sums with which to build new fortifications. The Dutch were asking for Condé, forgetting that by its name alone this acquisition would revive ancient memories and would unite all Frenchmen in arms. What Europe needed was rest. England would not always be there to defend the Netherlands which would have to rely for defence on Prussia. But Prussia by herself would not suffice, and even if it did, it would mean new inconvenience and subjection [2].

"It is not our business to collect trophies, but to try if we can bring back the world to peaceful habits," was Castlereagh's principle, and, applying it to the Dutch, he said: "The King of the Pays Bas had better trust to Europe for seven years, and to his fortifications afterwards, for protection" [3]. Moreover, he was anxious all the time not to allow the Russian Emperor to steal a march upon him in France and become too popular in that country, a notion which was bound to appeal to his colleagues in London. He succeeded, at any rate, in gaining over the British Cabinet to his policy of moderation, and from

[1] Aug. 1st 1815 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 783–4).
[2] Von Gagern to Van Nagell, Sept. 4th (*Ged.* VII, pp. 802–3). Castlereagh to Clancarty, Sept. 4th (*ibid.*, pp. 196–7).
[3] To Liverpool, Aug. 17th and 24th, (*Br. Dipl.*, pp. 366, 370).

that moment he was certain, with the assistance of Alexander, of being able to impose it upon the Allies, The agreement of Metternich to Castlereagh's plan, as formulated in a memorandum of August 31st which he transmitted to the Allies, was obtained without much difficulty [1], and the Prussians had to give way after some further resistance. Of the Dutch memorialising and canvassing, little notice was taken.

Concessions, of course, were unavoidable, and, as Wellington had written to the Dutch King in July, Castlereagh had to agree to the reduction of France to her frontiers of 1790. As the final discussions of the conditions to be exacted from France were taking place, the Prussians repeated their plea for the acquisition of Sarrelouis, which had been French before 1790, and of Luxemburg, and based it upon such convincing strategic considerations that Castlereagh had to agree. Luxemburg belonged to the Netherlands, and, in order to compensate them for its loss, Castlereagh decided upon a second breach of his principle by asking for Givet and Condé which also were French before 1790. Thus the Netherlands were to acquire Condé, Philippeville, Mariembourg, and Givet. Moreover, apart from an indemnity of 600 million francs, a payment of 200 million was demanded for the construction of barrier fortresses along the French border.

When presented with these conditions, the French began by refusing everything. As a result of a personal appeal from Louis XVIII to the Emperor Alexander, the Allied demands were slightly modified. Givet and Condé were left to France, and the sum total of payments required was reduced to 700 millions. Apart from a concession as to the amount, this was a concession of form, because the French disliked paying money that was admittedly intended for fortifications against themselves [2]. It was not without strong resistance on the part of Castlereagh and Wellington that Givet and Condé were left to France.

[1] *Camb. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, I, pp. 511 sqq. Sorel, *Révolution*, Vol. VIII, passim.
[2] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Sept. 25th 1815 (*Br. Dipl.*, p. 380).

When they found that the cession could not be carried, the British delegates tried at least to obtain the demolition of the fortifications of these towns. But even this was opposed by Alexander.

By the beginning of October the main lines of the treaty had been arranged in agreement with Richelieu, the head of the new French Government. They were laid down in the protocol of the meeting between the delegates of the Allies and the French on October 2nd. The treaty which embodied this arrangement was signed on November 20th. But, as had been the case with the first Treaty of Paris, the Allies had still to come to an understanding among themselves as to the final disposal of the French cessions. Castlereagh had at no time considered taking Luxemburg from the Netherlands without the consent of King William. In September, he had instructed Clancarty to obtain this agreement, and had even pointed to the possibility of an alternative arrangement which would leave to the King of the Netherlands the territorial and civil ownership of Luxemburg, while Prussia would acquire the guardianship of the fortresses in a military sense [1]. The latter agreement had immediately appeared less unattractive to the King. When, however, he heard that the French would not have to cede territory which they owned before 1790, he thought that he was safe in the possession of Luxemburg [2]. He was soon given to understand that he was under a misapprehension and that the most he could hope for was a condominium which left him the political sovereignty. To such an arrangement Great Britain had not the slightest objection. Luxemburg, garrisoned by Prussians, would, thought Castlereagh, in conjunction with Sarrelouis and Trèves, improve most essentially the military power of the Netherlands [3]. At the meeting of the plenipotentiaries of the Allies on November 3rd, it was agreed that Austria, Russia, and Great Britain should endeavour to obtain for the

[1] Castlereagh to Clancarty, Sept. 20th 1815 (*ibid*).
[2] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Sept. 25th (*Ged.* VII, p. 279).
[3] Castlereagh to Clancarty, Oct. 2nd (*Ged.* VII, p. 283).

King of Prussia the right to garrison Luxemburg jointly with the King of the Netherlands and to appoint the military governor of that place.

It might be thought that the mere communication of this intended endeavour would sound like an order to the King of the Netherlands. But on the one hand his velleity of reaching a closer understanding with Prussia had passed, for the Prussians continued to be as disagreeable as they had been for the last two years. On the other hand the new friendship with Russia was making him decidedly independent. He certainly was not slow in expressing his readiness to fall in with the desire of his powerful allies (November 12th) [1]. But the negotiations as to detail took nearly a year. They were conducted at Frankfort under the supervision of Clancarty, who at first was doubtful whether the Dutch really meant to come to an agreement. The King of the Netherlands delayed his decision because he first wanted the Prussians to execute their obligations under the Treaty of Vienna. They continued to occupy certain enclaves which they should have evacuated, and the frontier between the two countries was not yet settled in every detail. As soon as he realised this, Clancarty gave his fullest support to the policy of the Dutch [2]. He asked Prussia to put an end to the pretensions of the incorrigible von Sack, and Rose, the British Minister in Berlin, seconded his efforts. At the end of March the Prussian Government at last gave orders for the evacuation of the enclaves [3]. The frontier between Prussia and the Netherlands was settled by the Convention of May 25th and by the Treaties of June 26th and October 7th 1816. After this a supplementary treaty was soon concluded settling the way in which Luxemburg was to be garrisoned. The Netherlands were to provide one quarter, Prussia three quarters of the garrison. The

[1] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Nov. 12th 1815 (*Ged.* VIII, p. 6).
[2] Clancarty to Castlereagh, Jan 27th., and March 10th 1816 (*Ged.* VIII, pp. 15–16, 18).
[3] Clancarty to Humboldt, March 21st, to Van Nagell, Mar. 22nd, 1816 (*Ged.* VIII, pp. 19–21); Clancarty to Castlereagh, Mar. 31st (*ibid.*, p. 27).

military direction was placed entirely in the hands of Prussia.

Long before these negotiations had been concluded, other important matters which arose out of the last Napoleonic interlude had been settled by British diplomacy on behalf of Holland. At the second Peace of Paris the Allies had rescinded their amazing self-denying ordinance, and obtained the return of the works of art which had been removed to Paris in the days of the French victories. The greatest difficulties were experienced in extracting the Dutch pictures from the French. In answer to an appeal from the Dutch, the British overcame the passive resistance of the French, although, in so doing, they, and especially Wellington, "expended the whole stock of their popularity", as Castlereagh expressed it. Wellington had, in the end, to threaten the use of force, but there was no need to execute this threat. The Prussians were occupying the Louvre, where the pictures were kept, and a fatigue party of British soldiers was sent to take them away [1].

The apportioning of the indemnity of 700 million francs among the Allies was not an easy matter. It was agreed to reserve 137½ millions for fortifications to be erected along the French frontier. In order to increase the amount available for fortifications in the Netherlands, Great Britain renounced her claim to any share whatever of the 700 millions. This arrangement did not immediately meet with the approval of the Prussians, who seemed to consider that Great Britain should allow all her Allies to benefit by her renunciation [2]. It was agreed, eventually, upon the suggestion of Great Britain, that the King of the Netherlands, out of gratitude for the territorial gains he obtained, would renounce his share of the French indemnity in favour of Prussia and Austria. The money allotted for the construction of fortifications was of course not affected by this settlement, and out of the 137½ millions 60 millions were given to the Netherlands, while it

[1] Castlereagh to Clancarty, Sept. 20th 1815 (*Ged.* VII, p. 277); Wellington to Castlereagh, Sept. 23rd 1815 (*ibid.*, pp. 277–8).
[2] Bathurst to Castlereagh, Aug. 25th 1815 (*Br. Dipl.*, pp. 371–2).

was decided that the British Government would join with that of the Netherlands in order to determine the mode of applying these sums [1]. In this way, Great Britain secured the international recognition of her position of military guide and mentor to the young Kingdom of the Netherlands.

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[1] *Procès Verbal* of Nov. 21st 1815 (Dangeberg II, pp. 1642–3).

CHAPTER VI

THE RETURN OF THE DUTCH COLONIES

More than once, in the course of the previous chapters, mention has been made of the former Dutch colonies which had been seized by the British during the French wars. It was impossible to consider the extension of Dutch territory without occasionally referring to the return of the colonies, because the two problems were intimately connected in the minds of British statesmen. Nevertheless, a brief review of the manner in which the colonial problem was tackled by the British is necessary before this study of British policy towards the Netherlands can be regarded as complete. As the matter has been fully dealt with in other works [1], a general outline will here be sufficient.

When, in 1795, as a result of the French alliance the Batavian Republic became involved in the war with Great Britain, it possessed a large colonial empire in the East and the West Indies. The West Indian Colonies had passed from the Dutch West India Company to the state two years before, while the East Indian Colonies were on the point of being similarly acquired. A considerable number of these colonies were conquered by British forces in the course of the following years. In the West Indies, the British took Demarara, Essequibo, and Berbice in 1796, Surinam in 1799, Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire in 1800, and St. Eustatius, Saba, and St. Martin in 1801. In 1795

[1] P. H. Van der Kemp, *De Teruggave der Oost-Indische Kolonien*, 1814–1816. Colenbrander, *Vestiging*, Chap. V: De Teruggave der Koloniën. Colenbrander, *Koloniale Geschiedenis*, Vol. II.

the British occupied the Cape, all the Dutch factories on the continent of India, the west coast of Sumatra, and Malacca. In 1796 they conquered Ceylon, Amboina, and Banda. They long tried to occupy Ternate, but were unable to take it until shortly before the Peace of Amiens. By the time the negotiations for the Treaty of Amiens started, the only colonies that remained in Dutch hands were those against which the British had sent no expeditions: Java, Palembang, Banjermasin, Macassar, and Menado, the castle of Elmina on the Gold Coast, and the settlement of Decima in Japan.

We have seen that when the last Dutch stadholder William V came to England in 1795, he addressed a letter to the authorities in the Dutch colonies, ordering them to admit the British forces as those of a Power which was in relations of friendship and alliance with the States General[1]. We have also seen that the only result of this letter was to weaken the defence of the colonies against the British in a few cases by introducing hesitation into the counsels of the defenders. But no colony was surrendered as a result of the letter, and the pledge given by Lord Grenville that His Majesty would only keep in deposit any fortress or territory that would place itself under his protection as a result of the Kew letter did not apply. It was therefore recognised that Great Britain held the Dutch colonies by right of conquest, and it was upon this principle that she acted in retaining Ceylon.

When, in 1803, war broke out afresh, the British once more occupied the colonies they had returned to Holland. In the west they took in 1803 Essequibo and Berbice, in 1804 the mainland of Surinam, in 1807 Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire, and in 1810 St. Eustatius, Saba, and St. Martin. The Cape was taken in 1806, and gradually many of the colonies in the East Indies passed into the possession of the British. Apart from some raids on the coast of Java in order to destroy the Dutch war vessels that were laid up at Batavia, and to retain the mastery of the East-

[1] Above, p. 40–41.

ern Seas, the British made no attempt against Java while Holland kept a semblance of independence. When Schimmelpenninck was Dutch Ambassador in London in 1803, he was told that the British Government did not deem it worth while to conquer Java as long as it belonged to the Dutch, but that it would be a different thing if there were a risk of the island's passing into the possession of the French. Holland was annexed by France in 1810, and in August 1811 the British attacked Java. In September the Governor General signed a capitulation, by which Java, Madura, Macassar, Timor, and Palembang passed to England.

Once more, therefore, before peace negotiations started, Great Britain was in possession of all the Dutch colonies apart from Elmina and Decima. The position as to these colonies was entirely unambiguous. On the one hand there was Ceylon, which belonged to Great Britain by virtue of the Treaty of Amiens, and which need not, therefore, form the subject of any further negotiations. The British had from an early date desired to possess this island because, by its position and particularly by the fact that the port of Trincomali offered safer anchorage than could be found anywhere in the Bay of Bengal or along the Coromandel Coast, it was extremely useful for the defence of the British Empire in the East. On the other hand, the various colonies which had been occupied since the Treaty of Amiens belonged to Great Britain by right of conquest, a right which enjoyed international recognition and which at the present day still provides the most popular means of colonial expansion. It stands beyond dispute that Great Britain was perfectly entitled to keep possession of all her colonial conquests, provided her bargaining power enabled her to obtain treaty sanction for their official annexation.

That such was the position was perfectly understood by every party concerned. When William VI arrived in London in 1813, he asked Castlereagh, in their first interview, to what point it would suit Great Britain's interests to relinquish the Dutch colonies which she had conquered

during the war [1]. This was a clear admission of Great Britain's technical right to retain all the colonies. It should be noted that Malmesbury, the best friend of Holland and the House of Orange in England, considered that Great Britain had the right to keep some of Holland's colonies, and that this would even be to Holland's advantage [2]. Brougham also admitted the existence of this right for, in a letter to Van Hogendorp advising the abolition of the slave trade in the Dutch colonies, he held out as an inducement that after such a proclamation of principle "any minister in this country would find it very difficult to refuse treating for their restoration upon the most fair and liberal basis" [3]. We shall see at a further stage that it has been suggested that the Sovereign Prince, in order to satisfy his territorial ambitions in Europe, exchanged certain Dutch colonies for Belgium. We shall have no difficulty in proving that there can have been no question of such barter. Thus far, at any rate, we have established that the Prince had no legal title to the colonies, and that they were not his to give in exchange for any advantage whatsoever. When he was no longer the humble petitioner who anxiously enquired about the plans of Great Britain, the Sovereign Prince still took the same view of the colonial question. "H. R. H. understands", wrote Castlereagh to Liverpool after he had had a conference with the Prince at The Hague in January 1814, "that Great Britain remains master of this question, to execute her own liberal purpose towards Holland in her own way and at her own discretion [4]".

From the moment British statesmen gave their attention to the matter of colonial restitution, they made up their minds that they would not return all the colonies to Holland. The Cape, which was so important because it lay on the only sea route to the East, was to be kept in any case. In his answer to the first memorandum of the

[1] Above, p. 68.
[2] Malmesbury to H. Fagel, Dec. 3rd 1813 (*Ged.* VI, p. 1979).
[3] Nov. 11th 1813 (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* IV, p. 279).
[4] Jan. 7th and 8th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 26).

Prince of Orange, Castlereagh definitely declared that there were some colonies of which Great Britain could under no circumstances divest herself [1]. He did not, however, at this stage, intimate which colonies were to be retained, because he had decided to return the others according to a sliding scale principle, and he did not yet wish to bind himself to any details as to the application of this scale. In the course of 1813 Castlereagh stated and re-stated this principle many times, but he never formulated it more strikingly than at Châtillon, when he told the Allied ministers that, "with the exception of the Cape, there was no indisposition to return the whole, provided Holland could be rendered so effectually independent of France as to make it clear that we were strengthening an ally, not an enemy" [2]. Months before, Castlereagh had already made it clear, not only to the Prince of Orange, but also to the Allies, that the degree of restitution "would depend upon the apparent adequacy or inadequacy of the arrangements made for securing the independence of Holland [3]".

[1] Above, p. 73–74.
[2] Castlereagh to Liverpool, Feb. 6th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 46).
[3] Castlereagh to Cathcart, July 13th 1813 (*Br. Dipl.*, p. 14); Castlereagh's declaration to Prince of Orange on May 18th, 1813 (above, pp. 109 sqq.); Castlereagh to Aberdeen, Oct. 15th 1813: "It is material it should be distinctly explained that the cession of any of these possessions is altogether to depend upon the absolute separation of Holland from France, and the degree of restitution to be regulated by a due consideration of the adequacy of the security to be provided for the future independence of that country" (*F. O. Austria*, 101). Castlereagh's memorandum on Holland, communicated to the Prince of Orange on Nov. 7th 1813, with its promise "liberally to strengthen Holland in proportion as that important portion of Europe can be rendered secure by adequate arrangements against the power of France" (above, p. 88–92. Again, in the memorandum of the British Cabinet meeting of Dec. 26th 1813, it was laid down that the return of the colonies was entirely dependent upon the degree of security obtained against France by the peace terms. But even in the most favourable circumstances there was only a mention of the return of "the greater proportion" of the conquests (*Ged.* VII, pp. 16 sqq.). The principle was also stated by Liverpool, who wrote to Clancarty on Jan. 21st 1814 that he agreed with Castlereagh and with Clancarty that "restitution .... should be made in proportion to the degree of independence which the Government of Holland shall be able to maintain by the arrangements at the re-establishment of Peace" (Liverpool to Clancarty, Jan 21st. 1814, *Ged.* VII, p. 31).

It is evident, in view of the principle which was to regulate the return of the colonies, that any final decision had to wait until the position Holland was to occupy in post-war Europe became quite clear. When Van Hogendorp, immediately after Holland recovered her sovereignty, expressed the hope that Great Britain would promptly return all the Dutch colonies in the three parts of the world[1]. Henry Fagel informed him that the time for discussing the colonies had not arrived, because it was felt in England that to return them at once would amount to returning them to a hostile France[2]. When, at the beginning of January 1814, Castlereagh visited Holland on his way to the headquarters of the Allies, the colonial question was discussed between him, the Sovereign Prince, and Van Hogendorp. The British Foreign Secretary himself raised the colonial question. He appears, however, to have judged that the time for publicity had not yet arrived, partly no doubt because he wished the views of Great Britain to be placed before the Allies directly by himself[3]. Long before the time to take action had arrived, several factors had exercised considerable influence on the views of the British Government.

At the outset, as Castlereagh told the Sovereign Prince during the conversations which have just been mentioned, the British Government do not appear to have intended to keep any of the colonies conquered since the Peace of Amiens except the Cape. For the Cape, as we have seen in a previous chapter[4], they were willing to pay a sum of money, although this money cannot possibly be described as the price of a purchase, seeing that on the one hand the supposed seller was at no time given the option of declining to sell, while on the other hand the purchaser stipulated the precise use to which the payment was to be put. The purchase of the Cape was never more than a pretence put up in order to induce the British Parliament to grant

[1] H. Fagel to Van Hogendorp, Nov. 28th 1813 (Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* IV, p. 274).
[2] H. Fagel to Van Hogendorp, Dec. 1st 1813 (*ibid.*).
[3] Sovereign Prince to H. Fagel, Jan 8th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 449).
[4] See above, p. 299.

a sum in payment of Great Britain's share of the fortifications that were to be constructed in the Southern Netherlands.

Great Britain had a special reason for wishing to be generous to Holland in the matter of colonies. "As it is a great subject in our opinion", wrote Liverpool to Clancarty on January 21st, "to keep up the popular feeling in Holland in favour of this country, not only for our own sake, but for that of the Prince of Orange, we have therefore thought the most liberal concession upon the whole the wisest[1]". The policy of giving the Oranges credit in the eyes of Dutch public opinion for measures taken by the British Government was not a novelty. In 1747 a measure detrimental to Dutch trade was rescinded at the instance of Willem Bentinck, and this decision was privately communicated to him so that the Orange party might get the credit for it in the commercial circles of Amsterdam[2]. In this matter, the British were also sensitive to world opinion, and realised that their legal right to the Dutch colonies did not amount to a moral right. Several months later (April 19th 1814), Castlereagh wrote to Liverpool: "I still feel great doubts about the acquisition in sovereignty of so many Dutch colonies. I am sure our reputation on the continent, as a feature of strength, power and confidence, is of more real moment to us than an acquisition thus made[3]". This was written at a time when the programme of colonial acquisitions at the expense of Holland had already been considerably enlarged. We must now examine the causes of this enlargement of the British programme.

The idea of retaining other colonies apart from the Cape came to British statesmen in an indirect way. They envisaged the possibility of using one or more of the Dutch islands in the West Indies in order to satisfy the claims of a third party. As early as 1806 the then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Canning, had tried to induce the Swedes

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 31.
[2] P. Geyl, *Willem IV en Engeland*, p. 254, 263.
[3] *Ged.* VII, p. 108.

to join the ranks of the coalition by offering them Surinam. To this offer the King of Sweden had replied that he would prefer to acquire Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice. As Sweden did not join the coalition, these negotiations had no result. But in 1813, among other offers made to Sweden in order to bring her to declare war against France, Great Britain ceded to her the rights she had acquired by conquest in the Island of Guadeloupe, which formerly belonged to France. The news of this grant percolated to France, and resulted in the strongest possible expression of the settled determination of the French nation not to acquiesce in the loss of Guadeloupe. Both the Swedes and the British realised how difficult it might be to execute the Guadeloupe arrangement, and Sweden returned to the old idea that some Dutch colonies might be given her instead. The Cabinet memorandum of December 26th 1813 therefore envisaged the possibility of giving a Dutch colony to Sweden; but so far were the thoughts of British statesmen still from the idea of restricting the restoration of the Dutch colonial empire, apart from the Cape, that they stipulated that in case France made the return of Guadeloupe a *sine qua non*, Sweden might have to be compensated with the French island Bourbon, or with a Dutch colony, for which, however, Holland in its turn would be compensated by receiving Bourbon.

Bourbon was not to the taste of Sweden, as Castlereagh found as soon as he arrived at he headquarters of the Allies. Bernadotte, instead, asked for Surinam and Curaçao. Castlereagh knew that the Dutch attached great importance to these two colonies, and suggested instead a monetary compensation. Meanwhile, at the first Peace of Paris, Guadeloupe was definitely returned to France, and the Swedes had to be satisfied with an alternative. Great Britain promised Sweden that she would exert her influence with the Sovereign Prince in order to obtain from him a colonial cession which would compensate Sweden.

While these negotiations were proceeding, another and even more determined effort was being made to decide the British Government against unlimited colonial

restoration. Even before the first conquest of the Dutch West Indies by the British forces, the West Indian islands had been permeated with English influence. In Demerara on the South American continent, there was also a large British element, as can be seen from the fact that, in 1796, out of 206 plantations, 56 belonged to Englishmen. The British occupation, which had lasted so many years, naturally strengthened the British element in these colonies. Surinam alone had somehow remained to a considerable extent free from this infiltration. In 1806, when there had been strong rumours of a peace and of colonial restoration, a group of British merchants had sent a memorial to Fox reciting all the reasons which militated against the return of the West Indian Islands and of Demerara to Holland[1]. In 1814 a strong movement originated in the city of Liverpool, which was more directly concerned with the West Indian trade, against the retrocession of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice. Canning, who was then the member for Liverpool, transmitted to Lord Liverpool a memorial from planters, merchants, and other residents in Liverpool who were interested and employed in trading with these colonies. The memorial strongly pressed for the retention of Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo, mainly on economic grounds. Large sums, the memorialists pointed out, had been invested in the purchase of properties, in works, loans, mortgages and in buildings, warehouses, and stores. Since 1796 their productivity and population had increased threefold. Three quarters of the European population were British. Superior and inferior positions were now filled by British subjects, courts of law were conducted only in the English language. From the islands large supplies of lumber could be obtained. The capital in slaves and property in Demerara alone represented £ 6 million, while that colony produced vast quantities of cotton, sugar, rum, and coffee, for which considerable duties were paid to the British Government, and 150 ships were engaged in transporting this produce. Strategic considerations were also adduced.

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 146.

Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo in time of war would be "importantly connected with the preservation and interests of the West Indian Isles". Their possession would, moreover, assure to Great Britain the disposal of vast quantities of cotton for the manufacture of ammunition. The memorialists, like their predecessors of 1806, saw no objection to the return of Surinam to Holland. Nor did they object to the continuation of the privilege given to ships built in Holland, and navigated by Dutch seamen, of carrying on direct trade between Holland and the colonies which had formerly belonged to her [1].

This memorial made a deep impression on the Government. It was, moreover, no isolated manifestation. There could be no doubt that public opinion demanded the retention of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice. It is particularly interesting to note that this movement really meant the return to Anglo-Dutch relations of a factor which had been dormant for many years. The strategic-political factor which, generally speaking, made for co-operation between the two countries had been predominant during the French régime. No sooner was the French danger conjured than the element of economic rivalry which so frequently acted in a direction opposed to that of the strategic factor made itself felt once more. As usual, it became first noticeable in the colonial sphere. In this particular instance, it coloured the Government's policy to a considerable extent. Accustomed by the Swedish negotiations to the idea that Holland might have to be asked to sacrifice more than the Cape, the ministers began to envisage without reluctance the possibility of retaining further Dutch colonies for reasons which had nothing to do with imperial strategy. The Swedish claim and the commercial interests of the town of Liverpool began to look like two different aspects of one and the same principle. Sweden had to be compensated because Great Britain had rashly promised her Guadeloupe. It is true that Great Britain had promised Sweden no more than "all the rights which H. British Majesty possesses in this island, in so far

[1] Canning to Lord Liverpool, June 9th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, pp. 142–6).

as H.M. at present possesses them", but Sweden had no reason to take this otherwise than as an absolute promise. For Great Britain had as much, or as little, right to Guadeloupe as she had to the Cape or to any other colony which she had conquered during the war. The easiest way to compensate Sweden was to pay her a sum of money. To obtain the consent of Parliament to this expenditure, a concrete gain had to be shown by the British Government. What better gain could there be than that of the three West Indian colonies, which were coveted by the commercial interests of Liverpool? There remained the question of how the Dutch would view this operation of which they had to bear the expense.

This business was settled during the negotiations which took place in London during July and August 1814 [1]. After some pressure had been exercised upon him, the Swedish Ambassador was induced to accept for his country a compensation of one million sterling. Holland proved more obdurate. When, as a result of the certainty given by the Treaty of Paris that Holland would acquire a considerable extension of territory, the British were prepared to start in earnest with the negotiations about the colonies, the Foreign Minister Van Nagell demanded the unconditional return of every former Dutch colony. Castlereagh threatened to transfer the venue of the negotiations to Vienna. As we have seen, he would not have liked this to happen, but the Dutch liked it even less. The King of the Netherlands gave way and consented to the signature of the colonial treaty. But, as a result the foreign minister Van Nagell, who continued to disapprove of the arrangement, offered his resignation [2].

[1] For details, see the correspondence of H. Fagel with Van Nagell and the Sovereign Prince (*Ged.* VII, pp. 609–670, *passim*).

[2] In his memoirs Falck points out how impossible the idea of a postponement to Vienna would have been. At Vienna the frontier of the new state would have to be fixed. "And by whose agency, unless by that of the English Plenipotentiaries, had we any chance of obtaining a decision in agreement with our own wishes? Lord Castlereagh would have to be our support and our protection in all these affairs, and we should start by alienating his goodwill!...." (Falck, *Gedenkschriften*, p. 149).

In the course of these negotiations, a curious fact came to light. Great Britain had modified the very basis of her policy of colonial restoration. When, during the last days of July 1814, the Dutch displayed their unwillingness to cede any West Indian colonies, Castlereagh repeatedly told the Dutch Ambassador that Holland had no reason to complain at being asked to leave three colonies to England, when the territory of the mother country was being doubled [1]. This sounded very much as though these colonies were now to be considered as the price to be paid for the extension of territory in Europe, whereas there can be absolutely no doubt, as has been shown at the beginning of this chapter, that the return of the colonies had been represented as being dependent in the most definite manner upon the strengthening of the mother country by the acquisition of a suitable territorial barrier. The British Government, which at one time had said: "You cannot recover your colonies if you do not make sufficient acquisitions in the Southern Netherlands", now changed its tune and declared: "Now that you have acquired so much in the Southern Netherlands, you can easily forgo some more colonies". It cannot be argued that this view was brought forward by Castlereagh in the course of a discussion in which he found himself in need of a telling argument. The change of principle had arisen slowly in his mind, and when he communicated it to Fagel it was the result of mature consideration. The idea of a *quid pro quo* had been expressed in a letter from Castlereagh to Clancarty, dated March 4th, when he spoke of the expectation of the Allies that, in consideration of the continental arrangements proposed to be made in favour of the House of Orange, the Sovereign Prince should be prepared to give up a West Indian colony to Sweden, to indemnify her for the proposed cession of Guadeloupe to France [2].

[1] Le raisonnement sur lequel il (i.e. Castlereagh) revient toujours, est celui-ci: Comment peut-on se plaindre en Hollande d'avoir à nous laisser en possession de trois colonies quand nous doublons l'existence de la mère patrie?" (H. Fagel to Van Nagell, July 30th 1814, appendices, *ibid.*, p. 352).

[2] This letter has not been preserved, but the contents appear from Clancarty's answer of March 13th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 88). The same idea occurs again in a conversation between Castlereagh and Fagel, in June, when Castlereagh pointed out that the increase of Holland's European territory having become so much more considerable than could be foreseen at the time of his journey through Holland, the Dutch might well show themselves more easy-going in the matter of colonies (H. Fagel to Van Nagell, June 21st, *Ged.* VII, p. 610).

From the notion that a cession to Sweden was a form of payment for the extension of European territory, to the notion of a cession to Great Britain as a compensation for this increase, was only a small step. Under the pressure of mercantile interests, Castlereagh soon adopted it as an argument in justification of the extension of his colonial programme [1].

Can there, in view of the modification of Britain's attitude, be any question of an agreement between Britain and Holland, or the Dutch sovereign, by which in exchange for Great Britain's good offices in obtaining the Southern Netherlands for Holland, the latter country ceded three West Indian colonies to Great Britain? The idea of such a brokerage was not alien to the period. The Russians definitely suggested that Great Britain and Holland should take over their debt to Hope, the Amsterdam Bankers, in recognition of the increase of Dutch territory, which was a benefit, not only to Holland, but also to Great Britain; for, be it remarked in passing, contemporaries were well aware that the Dutch extension of territory was primarily to be considered as a triumph of British policy. Did the British at any time make with the Dutch a bargain by which they obtained payment for the realisation of this object, which was admittedly as much to their own advantage as to that of Holland? We should remember that this was asserted a few years after the event, and by no less a person than Van Hogendorp, who wrote in his memoirs that the House of Orange exchanged Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice for the

[1] Castlereagh's change of attitude may have been due, at least in part, to the fact that, as we have seen in earlier chapters, he was gradually acquiring a Continental outlook. There can be no doubt that the Allies in any case considered the European acquisitions of Holland as a pure gain for the House of Orange. Castlereagh himself realised this:

Southern Netherlands[1]. Van Hogendorp considered that it was in order to be able to strike this bargain that Great Britain prevented the Belgians from rebelling against the French in the same way as the Dutch had done. We know that Van Hogendorp was mistaken, and that the British agent Johnson did his best to foster a rebellion in Belgium. Van Hogendorp was embittered against the Dutch King when he wrote this part of his memoirs, and forgot that he, who had himself demanded, immediately after his *coup d'état* of November 1813, that Great Britain should return all the Dutch colonies, was not less desirous of uniting the two parts of the Netherlands than was his sovereign. Van Hogendorp's mistake has been repeated in a still more definite form by Pirenne [2], who affirms that Great Britain first decided to retain a part of the Dutch colonies, and subsequently gave Belgium to the Sovereign Prince as a *dédommagement*, while the Prince did not consider the Cape, Essequibo, and Demerara too high a price to pay for the crown he was going to wear. This view takes no account of the absolute formulation of the British policy in its first form (although Pirenne had access to documents which were not published in the days of Van Hogendorp), while it simply ignores the fact that the extension of territory was discussed between Great Britain and the Prince of Orange in the course of 1813, and that Castlereagh had already obtained for Holland the Southern Netherlands as far as the Maas by the time the decision of Great Britain to retain some of her West Indian acquisitions was announced to the Dutch.

The spirit in which the Sovereign Prince accepted the terms of Great Britain is illustrated by the words he wrote to the Dutch Ambassador in London, on July 22nd.

"Sweden", he said to Fagel in August 1814, "has really no claim upon Holland. The Allies have undertaken to indemnify this power for the loss of Guadeloupe. They can transfer a part of the responsibility for this indemnity upon Holland, in consideration of her union with Belgium". (Fagel to Falck, Aug. 9th, Falck, *Gedenkschriften*, p. 359).

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.*, V, pp. 512 sqq.

[2] Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, p. 234. Cf. Geyl, "Belgische Geschiedschrijving", in *De Groot Nederlandsche Gedachte*, Vol. II.

They are a very fine expression of what might be termed the philosophy of the weak, and they will show how far from their author's mind was the thought of an undignified bargain:

"We are fully aware of our weakness, and we recognise the superiority of England, so that we must remain satisfied with what she consents to return to us and with the conditions she will make for this restitution. But in every negotiation there is supposed to be a kind of equality of rights, which allows that interests and claims shall be discussed in a way which makes it possible for one party to consent only to such sacrifices or concessions as it can account for towards its own nation. There is a great difference between submitting to necessity and giving one's voluntary consent to an arrangement which one considers as entirely obnoxious. The former is the fate of the weak, the latter brings with it renunciations and the desertion of the principles upon which the well-being of states is founded. The abolition of the slave trade is an earnest of my desire to anticipate the wishes of the British Government, and I do not shrink from the risk of exposing myself to recriminations when I believe it necessary to take a decision. But the sacrifice of our best colonies or their complete deterioration is too grave a matter, and one fraught with such immense consequences, that I cannot co-operate in bringing it about. As a result of such co-operation I might be upbraided for having sacrificed the good of the state and of its inhabitants to the glory of my house. Therefore I prefer to be told: these are the Dutch colonies which will be returned to you, and on these conditions. Then at least I shall not be responsible to the nation for this odious thing" [1].

Van Nagell was equally explicit. To his mind, the acquisition of Belgium could be no compensation for the lost colonies, which represented a much higher value. "The sentiments and the views which have been put forward in the Treaty of Paris", he wrote to Henry Fagel, "will be entirely paralysed if our colonies are not returned. No increase of our European territory can compensate us for their loss. All that is done is to make our defence more onerous by extending it, while our resources, the very limbs which should provide for this defence, are being cut off [2]".

There were other stiputations about the colonies in the convention signed in London on August 13th. Apart from the Cape, Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice, which were retained by Great Britain, she also kept Cochin on

[1] *Ged.* VII, pp. 648–9.

[2] July 8th 1814 (*Ged.* VII, p. 633).

the Indian continent, in exchange for which she ceded to Holland the island of Banka. The reason of this arrangement was that the Cornish population feared the competition of Banka tin with their own mining industry, while Great Britain attached more importance to the possession of territories on the Indian continent[1]. The Dutch negotiators made the mistake of agreeing to the exchange of Cochin with its dependencies for Banka alone, and this had the result that when later Holland wished to acquire the island of Billiton, an isolated British possession in the East Indian Archipelago and clearly a dependency of Banka, they had to give a special compensation for it in the treaty of 1824. It was also agreed that the Dutch were not allowed to fortify their possessions on the Indian continent.

The cession, or rather non-restitution of the Cape, Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice was not explicitly mentioned in the public part of the treaty, where it was only said that the contracting parties reserved to themselves the right of deciding at a later date the ultimate destination of these territories. But in the secret articles Holland definitely ceded her rights in recognition of the payments made by Great Britain for the barrier, for the Russian debt, and for the Swedish indemnity. Holland also ceded the district of Bernagore near Calcutta for a pecuniary consideration, in view of the fact that Great Britain needed this district for the policing of the capital city of India.

It was agreed to postpone the publication of these secret articles until after the negotiations of Vienna. The reason for this secrecy is not far to seek. The supplementary articles contained several provisions which had no real relation with colonial affairs, except that the sums which they mentioned were assumed to be payments made to Holland for the colonial acquisitions of Great Britain. The use to which these payments were to be put was connected with Holland's territorial acquisitions in the Southern Netherlands, and these had not yet been

[1] Castlereagh to Clancarty, July 30th (*Ged.* VII, p. 169).

definitely fixed by the Powers. It was therefore a wise precaution to withhold information until the fate of the Netherlands had been finally settled[1]. The secret, however, was not well kept, and in September the "Times" published the news of the cession of Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo.

As a compensation for their loss, the Dutch were allowed to trade with their former colonies in ships built and owned in Holland. Fagel requested the Foreign Office to allow for this trade the use of any Dutch-owned vessel, even if it had not been built in Holland [2]. At first it was intended to refuse this request, but in the end it was granted [3], though only for the duration of five years, and only in the supplementary convention which was signed a year after the colonial treaty (Aug. 12th 1815). The Dutch had practically no vessels left after the Napoleonic wars, and this concession gave them time to build themselves a new mercantile fleet.

In deference to the wish of the British nation, the Dutch abolished the slave trade even before they recovered their colonies. On June 15th 1814 a decree of the Sovereign Prince announced that no ships would be cleared out or despatched from any port in the United Netherlands which were destined to fetch negroes from the coast of Africa, and to convey them to the continent or islands of America. It has frequently been asserted that Great Britain's zeal to obtain the abolition of the Slave Trade by other countries was due to the fact that while she had been able to replenish the stock of slaves in her colonies, the Dutch, French, Spanish, and Portuguese had been prevented by the war from introducing new slaves into theirs, and that the British wanted to maintain this advantage in order to compete under more favourable conditions with the other West Indian colonies. Van Hogendorp, writing in 1827, shows how utterly unfounded these

[1] H. Fagel to Falck, Aug. 9th 1814 (Falck, *Gedenkschriften*, pp. 359–360).

[2] July 21st 1814 (*F. O. Holland*, 73).

[3] *Ibid.* The draft of the reply was a refusal, which was afterwards modified into an acceptance.

accusations were. He admits that abolition had nowhere resulted in a decrease in the number of slaves, because their owners, realising that they would henceforth be unable to draw from the African reservoir, took greater care of them [1]. The measure created a very favourable impression upon the British public, for whom the abolition question was the only really important issue in foreign affairs.

The fifth article of the convention of August 13th 1814 declared that the West Indian colonies which were returned to the Sovereign Prince were to be evacuated by the British within three months from the ratification of the convention, and those beyond the Cape of Good Hope within six months. The ninth article stipulated that the ratification would take place within three weeks, or earlier if possible. Immediately on receipt of the convention, the Sovereign Prince signed the ratification, which was despatched to London on August 25th, the exchange of ratifications taking place on September 8th 1814. On September 22nd a Dutch commission consisting of three members, called the Commissioners General, was appointed to proceed to Batavia and to take over the Government of the East Indies from the British. One of the commissioners was Van der Capellen, who had been the Sovereign Prince's representative in Vincent's provisional administration of the Southern Netherlands, and who, in 1819, became Governor General of the Dutch East Indies.

Faithful to his word, the Sovereign Prince did not divulge the secret clauses of the Convention, even after they had become common knowledge in Great Britain. At the opening of the first ordinary session of the Dutch States General, on November 7th 1814, he contented himself with an announcement in the most general terms, stating that in consequence of arrangements made with the British Crown, the Netherlands would soon enter into possession of the main portion of its ancient colonies. In March 1815 the Department of Colonies was instructed to draft instructions for the Commissioners General, but

[1] Van Hogendorp, *Br. en Ged.* VII, pp. 22–23.

without being shown the text of the Convention! In June of the same year the Convention was presented to the British Parliament, and important debates took place upon it in both Houses. Nevertheless, it was communicated to the Dutch States General only on October 25th. Love of secrecy and the desire to preserve the management of public affairs exclusively to himself are adduced in explanation of the Dutch King's reticence [1]. But he probably had a further reason for this piecemeal release of the news. He may have hoped that the public and in particular the business world would be less disturbed by the considerable loss of colonial possessions if the news were not broken too suddenly. The precaution proved altogether superfluous. The Dutch, in their exhaustion after the shocks of the last twenty years, were well content to leave their affairs in the hands of their sovereign, and the thought of criticism did not occur to them. There was no debate in the States General, and the press made no comment whatever when the text of the Convention became known.

At the end of the period of six months after the exchange of ratifications, i.e. on March 8th 1815, the Dutch were not ready to take over the administration of the East Indian colonies. The Commissioners General could of course not proceed to the Indies without armed forces, and the organisation of an expedition took time. It had been decided that a first contingent of 3,000 men should leave Holland before the end of 1814, and a second, of about 2,000 men, in March or April of the following year. The lack of ships proved a great difficulty, and it was finally decided to re-fit as transports some of the war vessels which Holland had acquired under the Treaty of Paris. While arrangements to this end were in progress, the Sovereign Prince decided to appoint a commission consisting of three members who had previously served in the Indies, and who would have to acquaint the British administration in Java with the impending arrival of the Dutch Commissioners General. These special commissioners were provided

[1] Van der Kemp, *Teruggave*, p. 99.

with a letter of introduction from the British Government. They departed on December 28th 1814, but were shipwrecked, and no alternative transport became available before March 1815. Just then the news of Napoleon's escape from Elba was received, and the uncertainty thus created caused a new delay. It was felt that the troops which were destined for the colonies might be wanted for the defence of the mother country. Moreover, the British Government considered that until the European situation had become clearer, no steps could be taken for the transfer of the colonies. On May 5th the Governor of Bengal was informed that in view of the return of Napoleon the Dutch colonies would have for the present to remain under the protection of the British Government. On May 24th Castlereagh similarly told Henry Fagel that the Dutch Government would have to await further developments. If a victory of Napoleon had made it impossible to preserve the continental acquisitions of Holland, Great Britain would certainly have kept all the Dutch colonies, as Castlereagh wrote to Nesselrode on May 28th, thereby returning to his former and much more fundamental conception that the strengthening which resulted from the territorial acquisitions in Europe, far from having to be paid for by the cession of colonies, was an indispensable condition for the return of any of them [1].

By the time Napoleon had been defeated and the last obstacle in the way of the return of the colonies appeared to be removed, there seemed to be no further need for the preparatory mission of the three special commissioners, as the Commissioners General were now nearly ready to sail themselves. When, in August 1815, the special commissioners were informed that their services would not be required, one of them, Nahuys, offered to go at his own expense on board a ship which would not call at the Cape and would therefore arrive in the Indies somewhat sooner than the Commissioners General. His offer was accepted, and he left in October on a mission which was so little invested with any official character that it was not even

[1] *Ged.* VII, p. 244. Cf. Van der Kemp, *Teruggave*, p. 260.

deemed necessary to provide him with a British letter of introduction. Nahuys arrived at Batavia on March 5th 1816. He was received immediately by the Lieutenant-Governor Raffles, who, having been recalled by the British East India Company, was expecting the arrival of his successor Fendall and did not see his way to take any special measures, altogether apart from the fact that the return of the Dutch was extremely repugnant to him. Fendall arrived three days later, and did not behave as though he had come merely to fill up an interim. Impressed by his government's decision to postpone the transfer of the colonies, Fendall expected that British rule would still continue for an indefinite period. He did little to assist Nahuys in his preparatory task. Even when the Dutch Commissioners General arrived with their troops, in May 1816, Fendall declared himself unable to hand over his authority, because the warrants for the surrender, which had been sent almost reluctantly by the British Government, had not yet arrived. It would be difficult to blame Fendall for his caution.

The Commissioners General were under the impression that Fendall's only reason for delaying the transfer was that he hoped for some unforeseen circumstance which would make it unnecessary. Although in the absence of a written order Fendall was doing no more than his duty, the Commissioners started an acrimonious correspondence, with the result that relations between the outgoing and the new authorities became decidedly unpleasant. On the other hand, in their refusal to keep all the undertakings made towards the Javanese by the British, the Dutch commissioners were perfectly within their rights, although the British had pledged their successors to this course of action. They considered quite rightly that this pledge had been entirely *ultra vires*.

The warrant for the transfer was received at Batavia on July 4th 1816, whereupon, with no excess of cordiality, the Government of Java was handed over to the Dutch Commissioners in August. A longer time elapsed before some of the other colonies followed. The Moluccas were

returned to the Dutch only in 1817, Malacca and Padang in 1818. Raffles, the former Lieutenant Governor of Java, had by this time returned to the East as Lieutenant Governor of Bencoolen in Sumatra, and was putting every difficulty of which he could think in the way of the Dutch. The manner in which he obtained possession of Singapura, which was really a Dutch dependency, does not belong to the subject matter of this survey, and is only mentioned as an illustration of the very tense relationship which was growing up between the British and the Dutch authorities in the East. This relationship was itself a symbol of the fact that a period wherein political co-operation had eclipsed the discordant factor of economic rivalry between the British and the Dutch had come to an end.

CONCLUSION

We have passed in review the establishment of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands during the years 1813-1816, and we have seen how this state was a creation of British diplomacy. The Union of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands took place amidst the indifference, if not the opposition, of the populations concerned, and of the Continental Powers. It may be safely asserted that if the British Government had not supported the scheme for its establishment, it would never have come into existence. Yet this creative support was not altogether the result of a preconceived determination. Great Britain's only concern was to prevent the whole coast of the Low Countries, and in particular the Port of Antwerp and the mouth of the Scheldt, from remaining in the hands of France, the predominant military power on the Continent. The British Government would have preferred that in front of a free Holland, provided with a stronger frontier which would have included the port of Antwerp, Austria or another Continental power should take the post of danger along the French frontier. Austria declined the compromising honour; Prussia refused it unless given a larger portion of the Southern Netherlands than was offered. Why was no larger offer made to Prussia? In the first place because, notwithstanding the strained relations which had at one time existed between William VI of Orange and the British Ministers, he had been successful, for reasons which we have examined, in ingratiating himself with the British, and in converting them to his scheme for the resurrection of the United Netherlands. The plan for a matrimonial alliance between the Royal House of England and the House of Orange contributed to a

large extent to the formation of this new friendship. The next reason why the Prussian ambitions in the Southern Netherlands were not fulfilled was that, although the principle of nationality commanded no respect from the Powers at Vienna, the existence of one of the two elements of nationality, the consciousness of cohesion, was so manifest among the population of the Southern Netherlands that Great Britain considered it advisable to respect it. It remains a fact, nevertheless, that when the British plan of December 1813, which was the same as that of Pitt in 1805, proved impracticable, the British Government was able to fall back upon a previous plan, that of 1803, which provided for the Union of the two parts of the Netherlands under the House of Orange. It can therefore not be said that the solution of 1815 was a *pis aller*, although it certainly was only a second best.

Mention has been made in our introduction of the existence of two separate factors which influenced the relations between Great Britain and the Netherlands. The political factor, in 1813 and 1814, had overshadowed the factor of economic rivalry to such an extent that the British even contributed to the strengthening of the economic life of Holland by providing convoys to Dutch merchantmen and diplomatic support to Dutch consuls in the East and in the Barbary states, and by returning colonies to Holland. It was in the nature of things that with the return of Europe to settled conditions the economic factor should again make itself felt more powerfully. In 1814 and 1815 there were already numerous causes of friction about trade matters, as we saw in our second chapter. From 1815 onwards the ancient colonial rivalry resumed much of its intensity, while numerous difficulties cropped up, demands were made by Great Britain for the repayment of the £ 200,000 advanced to the Prince of Orange immediately upon the restoration of Dutch independence, and accounts, which did not sin by excess of moderation, were presented for arms, ammunition, and equipment supplied in the early part of 1814. A further element of discord had been introduced by the addition of industrial

Belgium to the territory of the old commercial competitors of England. The Belgians wanted a protective tariff, and already in 1814 the provisional government of Vincent had introduced taxes of a protective nature [1]. Much to the indignation of Van Hogendorp and of the commercial classes of Holland, the Dutch King adopted a policy of protectionism for the whole of his dominions. The South saw in Great Britain a dangerous rival: in July 1816 the textile workers of Ghent made a bonfire of a consignment of English cotton goods. The child of Castlereagh's policy was becoming unruly.

Even in the political sphere, the new kingdom was not proving as docile as had been hoped. It was showing an unpraiseworthy friendliness towards Russia, the great rival on the Continent. The barrier, which was the *raison d'être* of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, became a bone of contention. There were serious incidents concerned with the construction of the fortresses along the French frontier, and the Dutch King did not prove very ready to follow the advice of British engineers. On the other hand, the danger from France was diminishing with every year that passed. Napoleon was in safe custody at Saint Helena, and there was little chance of a new attempt at a *guerre de magnificence*, or even at a *guerre commune*. The European powers were grouping themselves in a different way, and the British were losing their interest in Continental affairs. The settlement of 1815 no longer appeared the only possible safeguard for Great Britain's East Coast. When the hour of trial of this settlement arrived, it was discovered that another way could be found of safeguarding the barrier along the frontier of France. A paper barrier — the guaranteed neutrality of Belgium — was substituted for the fortifications provided by the Treaty of Vienna. This new barrier did its work for nearly three generations, but broke down in the end. Since then, another solution of the problem of the shore of the Low Countries

[1] Johnson to Castlereagh, June 23rd 1814, enclosing a copy of the *Journal officiel du gouvernement de la Belgique*, of the same date (*F. O. Austria*, 111).

has been tried. The guaranteed neutrality has been abandoned, and the state which owns the southern part of this shore has become the closest ally of the dominant military power on the Continent, a state of affairs which would have astounded not only Castlereagh, but Palmerston himself.

APPENDIX A

F. O. RUSSIA, 83.
Castlereagh to Cathcart (No. 28).

Foreign Office, May 5th, 1813

The enclosed confidential memorandum of a conversation with the Prince of Orange held with me upon his arrival in this country, was, by my desire, to prevent mistakes, communicated to me in writing by His Serene Highness.

I have since seen His Serene Highness and stated to him, that however lively the Interest was which the British Government must always feel for the House of Orange, they could not advise His Royal Highness to come to any decision upon the subjects to which he had call'd their attention, without communication with their allies, and especially with His Imperial Majesty.

The Opinion of this Government is, that the attachment of the People of Holland to the Orange Family is still strong, that no other rallying point exists, and that they would not patiently submit to be transferred or incorporated with any other state.

The ancient government by a Stadholder is certainly too feeble for a state so exposed to French arms as Holland is, and there may be a difficulty not only in giving the Executive Power the necessary solidity, but in securing for the frontiers an adequate Barrier; but after weighing all these embarrassments, it is considered the best, indeed the only course to be pursued, to interest the people of Holland to rescue themselves from the yoke of France.

You will represent these sentiments to His Imperial Majesty on the part of your Government, and when I hear from your Lordship that the Allied Armies are sufficiently advanced to favor an insurrection in Holland, I shall take such measures, in concert with the Prince of Orange, as may facilitate His Serene Highness's views.

I should be glad to receive His Imperial Majesty's sentiments upon this subject without delay as His Serene Highness expresses a natural anxiety to be made acquainted with the intentions of the Allies, and circumstances may arise to render his Presence in the North of Germany desirable.

Your Lordship will communicate with Sir Charles Stewart on this subject, who will open the subject to His Prussian Majesty, so far as the sentiments of His Imperial Majesty render it expedient.

APPENDIX B

F. O. AUSTRIA, 101.
Memorandum on the Operations of the Allied Armies.

Foreign Office, December 17th 1813.

[This memorandum was sent to all British representatives accredited to the Allied Courts. The covering letter from Castlereagh pointed to the importance of „the accumulation of the largest possible force that can be brought forward, and without loss of time, in the direction of the enemies' frontiers towards Holland and the Low Countries".]

The British Government has considered with attention the several plans of campaign as transmitted by their ministers on the Continent. They do not presume, distant as they are from the scene of action, and uninformed as they are of details, to attempt to enter into a critical examination of the plan which it appears has been selected for execution.

They are disposed to confide in the military councils of the Allies, and to assume that the expediency of clearing and securing his rear, justified the Prince Royal of Sweden in directing his efforts so largely towards the North, and they also persuade themselves that the preponderating advantages of an offensive operation on the side of Switzerland warranted the Allies in selecting this more distant line of operations. But they cannot disguise from themselves, however advantageous in their ultimate results these operations may prove, they are productive in the first instance of considerable delay; that by throwing the great mass of the allied forces upon distant and extreme points, the intermediate line has been weakened; and all offensive movements on the side of the Electorates of the Rhine and the Low Countries either postponed or enfeebled.

In this view, they cannot but lament the necessity of withdrawing General Blücher's army from Cologne, where it might have at once assumed the offensive, to place it on the defensive in front of Mayence.

The advance of 50,000 men at the close of November from Cologne upon Brussels, and Antwerp, could have turned all the defences of Holland, and compelled the enemy wholly to withdraw from that

Country. — The weakness of the French Armies on that side, and the spirit of resistance known to pervade the Netherlands would probably have given to the Allies the indisputed possession of Holland, of Austrian Flanders, of Antwerp and its fleet.

A movement of this description would have enabled the left wing of the Army of the North to descend unopposed through Holland, and to assemble, in conjunction with the forces from England, on the extensive frontier of that country, — to unite with General Blücher's Army, and to advance in commanding strength into Flanders, probably sustained by an insurrection of its whole military population.

In adverting to the transcendant advantages that might have resulted from such a combined movement upon Holland and Flanders, the British Government is now only sollicitous of impressing upon the Allies the importance of yet securing, as far as possible, some of these great objects, by strengthening as early as possible the force which is destined to act in advance of the Lower Rhine.

The fall of Dresden, the expected surrender of the other fortresses on the Oder, the Elbe and the Vistula, — the formation of the new levies, may all in their degree afford the means of directing a more preponderating force to this quarter, and the British Government doubt not the late happy movement in Holland will, so soon as it was known at Head Quarters, have determined the Allies to anticipate their wishes in this respect.

The British Government do not deem it necessary to enlarge upon these subjects.

[The memorandum concludes by expressing the hope that unabated exertion beyond the Rhine will lead to complete success].

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